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JESUS THROUGH THE CENTURIES

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By

SHIRLEY JACKSON CASE

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PREFACE

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This volume completes a series of studies that have been in progress for several years. In the first decade of the present century the question of Jesus' historical existence was vigorously debated, particularly in Germany. The results of this agitation were carefully examined, and their inadequacy was set forth, by the present writer in a volume entitled *The Historicity of Jesus*, first published in the year 1912 and reissued in a new and revised edition in 1928. A second volume, *Jesus: A New Biography*, published in 1927, attempted to exhibit the figure of the real Jesus of Palestine as he can be known today by the processes of historical research. The present volume follows up the previous inquiries by tracing the story of Christianity's interest in Jesus since the time of his crucifixion, in order to evaluate his significance for religion from the point of view of modern historical scholarship and in the light of present-day scientific ways of thinking.

SHIRLEY JACKSON CASE

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
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CHAPTER ONE

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CHRISTIAN INTEREST IN JESUS

Jesus is the enigma of the centuries. What to make of him has been a puzzle to both saints and skeptics. Appraisals of his personality have ranged all the way from zero to infinity. At one extreme a small group of valiant doubters has proclaimed his absolute nonexistence in either time or eternity; since there never was a real earthly Jesus, historic Christendom vainly cherishes a creation of its own imagination. At the other extreme stands a vast throng of the faithful who have not only affirmed the reality of Jesus the man but have pledged their belief in his perfect godhood. Many shades of opinion intermediate between these extremes have found expression, especially in recent years. "Who do men say that I am?" is a question far more diversely answered today than when it was first propounded hundreds of years ago.

From the very first, friends and foes alike felt impelled to classify Jesus. His intimate acquaintances, even his nearest of kin, were sometimes in doubt about what to think of him. Alarmed at his unusual conduct, the members of his family once sought to take him home because they believed him out of his mind. But, in later years, his brother, James, became a leader among the Jerusalem disciples, who boldly affirmed their belief that Jesus was the Messiah. During his public activity he seemed to his enemies a veritable minion of Satan, distinguished because in league with the prince of demons; while his adherents credited him with possessing a special gift of the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, his opponents thought him a menace to society and finally brought about his execution. His disciples, on the other hand, lauded his virtues and insisted that he was to be classed among the great benefactors of humanity. His followers in general called him a spirit-endowed prophet, while an inner circle of friends surmised that he had been selected by God to perform a far more important function.

Ardent admirers of Jesus early became convinced that he had been divinely chosen to redeem Israel from bondage to the Romans. The Hebrew people would be gloriously delivered from their heathen oppressors by a God-approved act of the Galilean prophet. A few enthusiasts were so sure of his future that when they entered Jerusalem at the season of Passover they confidently declared him to be the prospective restorer of David's throne. Two disciples had boldly requested that he promise them seats of honor in his cabinet when presently he would establish his new government. Intimations on Jesus' part that he anticipated martyrdom were meaningless for his followers while they cherished the hope of a successful revolution insured by God's favor for their leader. But their glowing expectations were suddenly and sadly wrecked by the shock of the crucifixion.

The tragedy of the cross solved only momentarily the problem of classifying Jesus. Henceforth his opponents might be content to call him an executed criminal, but the affections and hopes of his former friends could not come to rest in this somber imagery. To increase their perplexity, certain persons reported that Jesus had been seen alive again a few days after the crucifixion. Straightway the disciples concluded that God had raised him from the dead, had elevated him to heaven, and had endowed him with a new and greater authority. They had mistakenly assumed that while on earth he would deliver Palestine from the Romans, yet their hope had not been completely erroneous. While he had been with them on earth they had only partially understood the divine purposes. Jesus would still effect the deliverance of Israel, but in a much more striking and brilliant manner. He would descend from heaven in glory, attended by angels, to purge the Holy Land of sinners and establish the Kingdom of God.

Henceforth interpreters of Jesus exercised greater and greater liberty of thought and phrase in their references to him. They now believed that during the period of his lowly earthly career he had been worthy to bear many a noble title. In rehearsing the story of his life they called him Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, Lord, Immanuel, Word of God, and Only Begotten One. There was no longer any doubt about what to think of the Galilean prophet. If men would honor him deservingly they would acknowledge him to be the Lord Jesus Christ, an incarnate deity while on earth, the future judge of the living and the dead, and the Savior of the world.

This glorified Jesus of the growing church rapidly overshadowed the earthly Jesus of Palestine. After the crucifixion his zealous disciples showed themselves more interested to affirm and defend their belief in a risen Messiah than to recall in detail the life of the lowly Nazarene. And such recollections as were preserved took on new meaning to fit the new prestige of the Risen One. The process of idealization rapidly gathered momentum. Time dimmed historical memories as death removed those who had known Jesus in the flesh. New disciples were gathered from among Greeks and Romans and Gauls and Britons, and more distant peoples in both Orient and Occident, who were destined to become the bearers of Christianity to all parts of the old world and the new. In the course of the centuries it became easily possible and highly

? The "idealization" occurred in the life time of those who had known Jn in the flesh.

desirable to divest Jesus of his Palestinian robes and reclothe him with garments that were in style among new peoples far removed by time and distance from him and the scenes of his earthly activity. Thus it has come about that a Palestinian Jewish artisan, who was rejected by his own countrymen and crucified by the Romans long ago, is today remembered, honored, and worshiped throughout a world-wide Christendom.

within 10 years of his death.

At the present time, in those lands where Christianity is the prevailing religion, Jesus is the most generally admired and highly revered individual in all history. In the ritual and teaching of the church he is an incomparably grand figure. Annually at the Christmas season his worshipers commemorate the birth of a child who is truly an infant deity. The very babe in the manger is made the fitting object of adoration among both men and angels. Again, in the Easter celebration, Christians yearly renew their faith in a triumphant divinity who by way of the cross, the tomb, and resurrection from the dead has ascended to a throne in the heavens. Not only in the great festivals of the Christian year, but at the more ordinary gatherings for worship, hymns are sung in Jesus' honor, prayers are addressed to him, and he is given a position in the universe not at all inferior to that of Jehovah whom the Scriptures picture as creator of the world and ruler of its destinies. In fact, Christendom in

Just so. Thus in the Chn faith

general unhesitatingly declares Mary's son to be "very God of very God."

Clerics and theologians have not been alone in their disposition to exalt Jesus. The laity has been equally ardent in its devotion. With a zeal almost suggestive of desperation many generations of adherents have striven to magnify the name of Jesus by resort to every aesthetic device known to them in form and color and sound and motion. They have labored indefatigably to rear in his honor magnificent structures richly adorned with varied works of art, and have filled these houses of worship with decorative symbols, elaborate pageantry, and enchanting song. The architects, sculptors, painters, musicians, orators, and litterateurs of many centuries have dedicated to Jesus the best powers of their creative genius. Yet when these noble productions of men's hands were completed they still seemed to hosts of his admirers an inadequate recognition of his transcendent glory.

The glorified Jesus of Christian art is more than an aesthetic ideal, more indeed than a deified mortal. He possesses still another distinction. He was once God in the flesh and henceforth he communicates a new dignity and grace to the life of that humanity which he shared. Painted as a child in the arms of Mary, he sanctifies motherhood. Depicted as the Good Shepherd on the stained-glass window, through which mellow lights fall gently upon his worshipers, his ideal kindliness becomes an unfailing source of comfort to needy humanity. And millions of world-weary spirits kneeling before a crucifix see behind this gruesome portrayal of their hero's suffering not merely a symbol of the death agonies that inevitably overtake all mortals, but an assurance of triumph for every disciple of the Redeemer who through his sacrificial death has purchased victory for his followers. Jesus—as child, as teacher, as healer, as friend, as martyr—incarnates Deity over the whole range of humanity's experience, and thus he is an ever present divine Savior.

Those branches of Christendom in which ritual and art find less favor discover other ways to glorify Jesus. When creedal interests are uppermost, he is honored above all else for his part in the formal program by which the possibility of mankind's rescue from a lost world has been effected. Or, again, if it happens that moral idealism is felt to be the essence of religion, a new appreciation of Jesus' supremacy is made available in the picture that is drawn of his sinless life and in the standardization of his precepts. In him one finds a complete embodiment of the faith and a unique exemplification of the life required of his followers at the present moment. Jesus is the perfect Christian who centuries ago exhibited a purity of character and a spiritual outreach that are still a fleeing goal for all worthy disciples. He is, and must ever remain, their necessary but unattainable ideal.

To make Jesus normative for the thinking and conduct of his adherents is a firmly intrenched habit everywhere in Christendom today. Even the most divergent groups severally honor him as the author and exemplar of their distinctive types of belief and practice. Convinced that one's own church is true to Jesus, one deplores the seeming departure from him of all other Christian bodies. It has been characteristic of Protestantism to claim for itself fidelity to him, while alleging that he has been sadly forsaken by Catholicism. New denominations have in turn laid a similar charge at the door of the older Protestant groups.

The increasing variety and complexity of life within Protestantism in recent years has furnished a great many different robes with which to adorn the figure of Jesus. Every shade of activity having behind it the inspiration of a religious impulse depicts him in accordance with its distinctive interests and ideals. He is made the authoritative teacher for a modern social order, or even the exemplary social reformer himself. Some interpreters have found in him the model pacifist, while others would make him the ideal belligerent. As still others see him, he was the typical man of affairs who applied to religion the technique of modern advertising and the practice of Rotarian good fellow-

de Harnack

ship. Many find his chief significance exemplified in more dignified forms of activity. Sometimes we are told that genuine religion is essentially poetry, and that Jesus was the great poet of all time. Less unique is the modern revival of mysticism, in which Jesus, as a matter of course, becomes the most conspicuous exponent of the meditative life. In short, whatever one imagines the ideal Christian to be in one's own area of experience and activity, it is thought natural and proper to make Jesus the supreme example of just that type of person.

Also inadequate
but important for
the life story.

Entirely outside the pale of the church one occasionally meets with individual idealists who freely appeal to Jesus in support of their proposed panaceas for human ills, while they sharply condemn established Christianity for alleged neglect of its founder. Behind all such criticisms lies a common motive. To laud the ancient hero and defame the existing institution is a tendency inspired by the familiar assumption that an ideal, in order to be valid, must find its justification in the past. On this hypothesis any dissatisfaction with one or another branch of present-day Christianity becomes prima facie evidence that it has departed from the standards of Jesus. But it is the fate of all social institutions, the church included, to need revision from age to age as they cease to meet the demands of new times and circumstances. Feelings of discontent inspire new ideals, the very essence of which is an urge to change, transcend, or supersede the inherited institution. Hence a fresh appeal is made to Jesus to justify new interests. Otherwise ideals would be left to defend their right to exist simply in their own name—for many persons an unthinkable alternative.

It has been commonly believed that there are no serious discrepancies between the idealized Jesus portrayed in the history of Christianity and the actual Jesus of Palestine who lived and died in that remote part of the world hundreds of years ago. That there has been a historical development and an elaboration of thinking about him may be readily admitted, but it is interpreted to mean that he has been more adequately appraised by his later disciples than by his contemporaries. In its new portraiture the church was merely saying of him the things that ought to have been said by his personal companions; the earthly Jesus, when properly appreciated, is thought to harmonize perfectly with the glorified Christ whom historic Christendom portrays. Thus the process of idealization is assumed to have remained essentially true to historic fact.

Nowadays one is forced to differentiate more clearly between the real person and the idealized image, between the "Jesus of history" and the "Christ of faith." The scientific temper of modern times rigorously demands a sharp distinction between historic fact and subsequent elaboration, whether it be in the portrayal of a Lincoln, a Washington, a Caesar, an Alexander, a Buddha, a Confucius, a Zoroaster, a Mohammed, or a Jesus. One who sincerely desires to have Jesus win the respect of men today must recognize that his reputation cannot thrive in the intellectual atmosphere of the twentieth century if it is unable to endure the white light of historical research. And it is becoming constantly more apparent to the critical student that the real Jesus of history and the ideal Jesus of the church are two very different persons. If the traditional interpretations of him are to be maintained they must find some support other than the usual assumption that they were essentially embodied in the historical Jesus, or that he sanctioned their validity.

Contra.

But the idealist does not despair even in the presence of historical demands. The attempt to find in Jesus justification for one's cherished opinions does not easily give way in favor of a universal desire to seek only the real Jesus of history before asking how his significance for today is to be properly appraised. It is far easier to adjust him to a present situation than to orient one's self in the ancient world where he actually lived. One who would make Jesus at home in a modern world needs only to select from the past those phases of his life and teaching that can be thought to have a bearing upon present issues. Even the restoration of a complete historical portrait is unnecessary, since features in the picture that might be distinctive of ancient times can have at most only an antiquarian interest. A Jesus for the twentieth century needs only to think its thoughts, speak its language, and deliver pronouncements on its crucial problems. But so much he must do—or must be made to do by the interpreter—irrespective of the modernity of the issue. Whether in the throes of international politics, or in perplexity over the moral issues of an industrial conflict, or in any other present-day difficulty involving religious attitudes, many persons still feel it necessary to find in Jesus justification for their course of procedure. The past must be made to yield norms for the present.

But how is one to proceed if the Jesus of reality, as discovered by historical study, fails to sponsor present ideals? Jesus may be found to have given no consideration to some of our most perplexing problems. He and his contemporaries were engrossed in issues integral to the life of their own age and of a Palestinian society, and it is hardly to be imagined that he would have taught or acted with specific reference to our international relations, to the present complicated industrial system, or to other problems distinctive of modern civilization. Under these circumstances one might

This is not the Chr. view point. Jesus is not deemed absolute in the doctrinaire sense

question whether historical study can permit Jesus to be at home in the twentieth century.

A simple and seemingly effective way of meeting the difficulty is to employ a process of deduction and generalization based as strictly as possible on historical data. From the concrete things that Jesus is believed to have said and done, inferences are to be drawn regarding his probable opinion on every variety of religious or moral question. By divorcing him from time and place and pouring his example and precept into a conventional mold of abstract principles supposed to be unconditioned, timeless, and eternally valid, one assumes that the exemplary conduct and teachings of Jesus can be freed from Palestinian shackles and made a perpetual possession of each new age of human idealism.[1]

Thus Jesus today is at the mercy of a multitude of well-meaning friends who conscientiously seek to do him honor by portraying him in the varied colors of their own immediate religious concerns. To picture him otherwise would seem to diminish his significance for their thinking. Hence they unhesitatingly affirm that the real Jesus has at last been truly discovered in that figure who serves for them as the noblest embodiment of their present ideals. Any suggestion that he may have been primarily concerned with interests different from those characteristic of a modern community, and may have had no desire to pose as a model for all time, is likely to be adjudged beforehand as derogatory to his honor.

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[1] This method of modernizing Jesus is principally an inheritance from Hegel's philosophy of religion as applied to Christianity by the Tübingen school and bequeathed by it to wide areas of Protestantism. The method is now current in circles where its first great advocate, F. C. Baur, would be quite unwelcome. One who has any curiosity on the question of origins should read what Baur wrote in the early part of his *Das Christentum und die christliche Kirche der drei ersten Jahrhunderte* (Tübingen, 1853) about the absolute universality of the principles of Jesus. The key to Baur's procedure is disclosed in his slogan, "Ohne Philosophie bleibt mir die Geschichte ewig tod und stumm," and this philosophy is Hegelian idealism. !

For the historian, however, the real Jesus must at the very outset be released from bondage to twentieth-century ideals. Not that one may expect to speak in absolutely detached fashion even about the Jesus of history. Memory of him has from the very first compelled a strong emotional response among both friends and enemies. Were an attitude of complete detachment to be realized by the student, perhaps no interest in Jesus would survive. But one who has a conscientious regard for historical fact is not denied the privilege of believing that a clearer vision of the real Palestinian Jesus, engaged in local religious activities among the people of his day, will have its proper significance even for moderns. At least this procedure should insure a measure of escape from that confusion which at present results from depicting him in so many varied hues and making him sponsor for so wide a variety of conflicting opinions and interests.

That memory of Jesus should have served so long and persistently the needs of so many different peoples over so wide an area of the earth's surface is a significant fact which no historian will for a moment ignore. At the same time, the rigorous demands of modern knowledge are no less insistent that one shall take full account of the varied forces that in new times and among new poeples and under changing circumstances exercised a continuously transforming influence upon the portrait of Jesus which successive generations of Christians have produced and exhibited to the admiring gaze of their contemporaries. Whether or not these representations have been true to reality can be answered only by comparison with the verifiable facts about Jesus' career and an understanding of the new stimuli that from time to time inspired fresh interpretations of him during the course of the church's history.

To evaluate the significance of the real historical Jesus for religion today one must first escape from the confusion of modern varieties of interest in Jesus as sponsor for present ideals. Custom has so universally decreed the propriety of using him to justify all present-day religious concerns that the student finds it no easy task to extricate himself from the mass of fanciful imagery now freely employed in depicting a historical Jesus whose chief function is to furnish models for twentieth-century people. Hardly less difficult is it to thread one's way successfully back over the centuries past those accumulated idealizations of Jesus that have flourished luxuriantly along the banks of the stream of history. It is necessary not only to span a wide intervening gulf of time but to cross seas and traverse continents and pursue a perilous path through successive strata of cultural developments. One must strive to retrace the whole course of evolution through which interest in Jesus has passed since that memorable day when the hopes of his expectant followers were temporarily shattered by the tragic event on Calvary.

No – only the primary ones of the first centuries

CHAPTER TWO

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THE TRIUMPHANT MARTYR

It was a band of enthusiastic disciples that accompanied Jesus on his last journey to Jerusalem. The chief feast of the religious year was at hand, when Jews in every quarter of the Roman world turned their faces toward the Holy City. In Palestine especially people of every class assembled for the festival. Peasants left their farms and their flocks, fishermen about the Sea of Galilee hung up their nets, artisans laid aside the tools of their trade, the professional scribe ceased temporarily his activities at the local synagogue, even from foreign cities pilgrims came in large numbers by land or sea, all joining to swell the throng of visitors who with pious intent and loyalty to the customs of their ancestors gathered in Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover.

The season was rich in memories and full of suggestion. It brought to mind events that had happened in days of old when God had rescued his people from their bondage in Egypt. In their hour of sore distress he had sent the angel of death to smite the oppressor and spare the oppressed, and by a series of marvelous displays had accomplished the deliverance of the Hebrews. These events had happened many centuries ago, but the grateful descendants of the liberated people still yearly celebrated the occasion with elaborate ceremonies and exalted feelings. Although they had long since entered the land of promise, the God of their forefathers still remained the object of grateful devotion and the source of unfailing hope.

Notwithstanding the centuries that had elapsed since the settlement of their ancestors in Palestine, in the age of Tiberius many Palestinian Jews must have felt themselves in a state of bondage hardly more tolerable than that which their fathers had experienced in Egypt. Long since their beloved country had been ruthlessly absorbed into the Roman Empire. Princes of the Davidic line no longer reigned in Judea. Even the descendants of the less highly idealized Maccabean house had fared ill at the hands of King Herod, who ruled by consent of the Emperor Augustus. Nor had Herod's death brought any measure of relief. The situation became only the more aggravated as the Romans now concerned themselves more immediately with the administration of the country's affairs.

Roman domination in Palestine signified far more for the subject people than merely the compulsory surrender of their political ambitions. That alone might have occasioned no little distress of spirit for a race as devoted as were the Jews to the ideals of theocracy. But there were other more concrete and realistic grounds for anxiety. Roman rule had brought into the Holy Land a flood of desecrating influences from which the conquered race found it very difficult to remain immune. As a matter of course the overlord demanded tribute. He also made himself supreme administrator of justice, and the imperial armies recognized no land too sacred for the display of the Roman eagles. Following the death of Herod in 4 B.C., the smoldering embers of discontent occasionally blazed up in revolutionary outbreaks, but Roman soldiers were always on hand to crush the hopes of the more zealous nationalists. Yet suppression by violence only increased the feeling of unrest, and frequently led to new and more irritating displays of the conqueror's presence. The collectors of tribute became more diligent and offensive in the discharge of their duties. The police were more watchful, and often were ready on slight provocation to wound the feelings of their subjects. The heathen government arrogated to itself the appointment of the Jewish high priests and held in its possession the sacred robes of that office. With the growing influx of foreigners the country was further defiled by the celebration of strange religious rites and the festivities of a characteristic Roman holiday.[1]

The yoke of Rome had grown heavier year by year. With increasing frequency Jewish sensibilities were outraged by one or another act of the invaders. The violent eruption of Jewish patriotism in the revolt of A.D. 66 had been some seventy years gathering momentum, yet it is hardly to be described even at its climax as a well-organized political movement. Indeed, the absence of a well-formulated revolutionary program played no unimportant part in the ultimate failure of this great sacrificial offering of life and property in the cause of freedom. From first to last the uprising was a mighty outburst of religious feeling that betrayed only slight evidences of a carefully devised political movement. Those who sponsored the cause, although they were enthusiasts for liberty, were nevertheless confident that their ultimate deliverance could be properly effected only by means of divine intervention on their behalf. The same God who had rescued their ancestors from bondage in Egypt, and had later delivered Judea from the scourge of Antiochus Epiphanes, would again show his favor for the struggling patriots fighting for liberation from Roman suppression.

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[1] See, e.g., Josephus *Ant.* xv. 267–91.

At a Passover feast the people were made acutely conscious of Roman domination. Residents in the more remote country districts might there have remained largely unaware of the full severity of Roman oppression as they grew accustomed to its operation in the normal course of their activities.

But when attending the festivities at Jerusalem they saw all about them on the streets or in the court of the temple new and glaring evidences of the conqueror's presence. The Roman procurator took care at such times to increase his vigilance, while the police whom he placed on guard were often disrespectful and offensive. It was not at all surprising that the Passover pilgrims in holy zeal should on occasion stone a band of soldiers. And it was equally in accord with the customs of the rulers for horsemen to be turned loose upon a defenseless throng of the Jewish people to cut them down by the thousands.[1] The situation was one where tragic events were to be expected, and where the expectation was frequently realized.

Passover was also an especially suitable moment for the reviving of Jewish hopes. Not only did the ceremonies bring to mind afresh the memories of a miraculous deliverance out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses, but the assembling of a large throng engendered a crowd psychology that might readily be capitalized by any leader cherishing an ambition to head a popular uprising. The political authorities were merely demonstrating their common sense when they exercised especial vigilance at the time of the feast. Naturally they were suspicious of all agitators about whom a band of the excitable populace might quickly assemble. They arrested and executed suspected persons by the hundreds, and on the slightest evidence, whenever the Roman peace seemed in danger. While this state of affairs prevailed, the oppressed people who gathered in their Holy City to celebrate this most sacred festival of their religious year must have been acutely aware of a present bondage to the Romans from which they were entitled to hope for a deliverance by the same God who had rescued their forefathers from subjection to the Pharaohs.

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[1] Cf. Josephus *War* ii. 10–13, 224; *Ant.* xvii. 149–55, 213–18; xx. 105–17.

It was at one of these critical seasons during the procuratorship of Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, that Jesus and a group of his friends incurred the displeasure of the authorities. Undoubtedly the followers of Jesus constituted a relatively small company in comparison with the crowds that flocked to the city on this occasion. Whatever may have been Jesus' state of mind, it is apparent that high hopes were throbbing in the breasts of his disciples. For months they had been following him about in Galilee, listening to words that seemed to them spoken with truly prophetic fervor and daily falling more and more under the spell of his hypnotic personality. His summons to preparation for membership in the Kingdom of Heaven had led them to forsake their ordinary callings and join themselves to the itinerant prophet. They were restless spirits who, like many of the Galileans, felt

Yes - but not the
[illegible] '

that the time was ripe for a change in the affairs of the Jewish race. Particularly after the death of Herod the Great did Galilee become a fertile soil for the sprouting of discontent. It was here that John the Baptist and Jesus found a ready hearing when they issued a call to repentance and announced the imminence of the divine deliverance; just as it was here too that political revolutionists like Judas of Gamala and his successors found their chief support.

Jesus had depicted the Kingdom in genuinely apocalyptic fashion; it would descend upon men suddenly, revealed from heaven by an act of God and preceded by the Day of Judgment. Preparation for its advent was the great burden of Jesus' message. But the imagination of the excitable and admiring disciples tended to supplement the picture by assigning to the prophet himself a more significant rôle. Nevertheless, at this stage in their development the companions of Jesus could not make him the kind of Messiah that would appear suddenly on the clouds to inaugurate a new political order. If the apocalyptic scheme as it lay in their minds provided for any such subordinate agent to act in God's stead, this functionary could not have been pictured in human form now living among men. He must have been a heavenly being yet to be revealed when the moment for the inauguration of the Kingdom had arrived. The gospel writers are true to the genius of the apocalyptic hope, as well as to the mind of the disciples, when they consistently represent that the companions of Jesus during his lifetime failed to arrive at a conception of his mission capable of being expressed in terms of apocalyptic messiahship.[1]

The more friends of Jesus came to admire him, the stronger was their conviction that he himself was about to perform some act of great significance for the deliverance of his countrymen. Why calmly await longer the future establishment of the Kingdom in purely apocalyptic fashion, when at the moment there was among the disciples an individual in the person of this picturesque prophet who seemed to them adequately equipped by God to introduce a régime of the older Davidic type? They believed that Jesus now stood sufficiently high in the favor of the Deity to justify them in expecting that presently he would adopt a more aggressive policy. Even though they were sympathetic with apocalypticism, they were not so firmly wedded to this imagery that they could not freely blend it with a more realistic picture of deliverance to be effected by immediate action, after a model not unlike that which Judas of Galilee urged upon his followers. As the months passed and the disciples of

[1] Cf. S. J. Case, *Jesus: A New Biography* (Chicago, 1927), pp. 242–64, 360–78, and *Studies in Early Christianity* (New York, 1928), pp. 313–32.

Jesus grew ever more attached to him, they became increasingly confident that he was the one whom God had chosen to effect a successful deliverance of Palestine from the Romans.

It was unfortunate that some of Jesus' followers entertained political ambitions for their leader. They were sure to talk too freely of these hopes among their neighbors, and occasionally they would inevitably allow their enthusiasm to inspire unwise expressions of admiration for their teacher. Later, they admitted that sometimes they had spoken of their expectations to Jesus himself, but only to be rebuffed. They had been puzzled by his reserve, but he had not been successful in restraining their imaginations. Their expectation seems to have glowed with unusual zeal as they journeyed to Jerusalem to attend the Passover. And if they greeted him in any such fashion as is represented by the gospel story of the triumphal entry, most certainly the police would have taken for granted that Jesus intended to declare himself in favor of national revolution (Mark 11:8–10). By this very act his followers were unwittingly preparing the cross for their master.

Certainly not all of Jesus' friends yielded to the lure of revolutionary hopes, nor is it probable that all who cherished his words abandoned their regular occupations in order to join the company of his traveling companions. Indeed, his more restrained admirers may have rendered his cause much service as they, like the disciples of the prophets of old, preserved the message of the teacher, repeating it among themselves and their friends for the purification and enrichment of life. But the followers who accompanied Jesus to Jerusalem were of a different temper. They constituted a band of enthusiastic admirers eager for the day when they could hail him as Israel's deliverer entitled to sit upon the throne of David. In their yearnings after a Messiah who would restore Jewish supremacy in Palestine, they were impatient for Jesus to assume a rôle like that of a Judas, a Theudas, or any one of the other numerous champions of national liberty, who both before and after Jesus' day heroically placed themselves at the head of a forlorn cause, in the hope that they might be the divinely chosen deliverers of the Jewish people from bondage to the Romans.

Contrary to the only record.

Pilate answered the disciples' triumphal "Hosanna" by nailing Jesus to a cross. This summary treatment of suspected persons was characteristic Roman procedure. If the Galilean fishermen had been better schooled in practical politics and less trustful of supernatural intervention on behalf of their leader, they might easily have anticipated the disaster so soon to shatter their hopes. But in their exalted state of feeling they were quite incapable of either doubt or caution. Later they perceived that it had been a great error for James and John on the way up to Jerusalem to speculate upon the prospect of holding seats of honor in the government of the new Davidic king (Mark 10:35 ff.). In the light of subsequent experience the disciples even went so far as to concede that the hope of Peter, when he visualized Jesus in the form of a triumphant Messiah, had really been inspired by Satan (Mark 8:33). But for the moment they perceived none of these things. The crucifixion came to them as a bolt from the blue. Temporarily it blasted their fondest hopes. As was their custom, they ascribed to Jesus their own state of mind, and reported that on the cross he had cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (See Mark 15:34.) Since God's favor had been withdrawn from Jesus, he could no longer claim their allegiance. Disillusioned, they now returned to their homes.

Those friends of Jesus who had concerned themselves chiefly with his religious message of reform in preparation for judgment undoubtedly took a very different attitude toward his death. For them the event involved no necessary reversal of their previous estimate of his work. It was not at all inconsistent with the career of a prophet that he should meet rejection, or even suffer martyrdom. To close his career with a violent death constituted no denial of the divine favor, but fittingly attested the genuineness of his prophetic calling. Henceforth his words were all the more highly esteemed, as his followers collected and preserved them for the upbuilding of their character and for use in perpetuating the work of reform that the prophet had begun. It need not surprise students of the gospel to observe that the early collection of Jesus' teaching, commonly called "Logia," conspicuously neglects the final incidents at Jerusalem. There were some disciples of Jesus who were more interested to remember his religious message as a prophet than they were to recount the tragic manner in which his career came to a close, or to speculate about his official status in Jewish messianic programs.

On the other hand, Peter and his closest associates were left by the crucifixion in a much more perplexed state of mind. For them the religious precepts and attitudes of Jesus apparently had been incidental to the significance attaching to his person. They saw in him a picturesque individual so superior to his contemporaries that he seemed to be exactly the one whom God had chosen to redeem Israel from foreign oppression. While heeding Jesus' call to prepare for the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, these disciples had built up around his figure the vain hope of a successful, because God-approved, coup against Rome. Even when Jesus admitted the propriety of paying tribute to

Caesar they still remained hopeful, not because they thought he would permanently approve of the tribute, but rather because they were confident that soon he would effect their complete liberation. Never had their confidence mounted higher than when entering Jerusalem they hailed him as the restorer of the Kingdom of David. And never before in their acquaintance with him had they encountered any experience so staggering as the crucifixion. Had Elijah descended in visible form to lift Jesus triumphantly from the spikes that held his hands and feet to the cross, his disciples could not have been filled with greater amazement.

Of all the disciples Peter was the most capable of registering a highly emotional reaction toward the shock of the crucifixion. He was a man of strong feeling in whom the tides of emotion rose and fell with irresistible force. Throughout his career he ever remained the tortured victim of rival impulses. His generosity toward Paul and Barnabas could one day take the form of hearty participation in the social life of the church at Antioch, but when messengers came with a warning from James, Peter experienced a sudden change of conviction so powerful that it could withstand even the savage attack of Paul (Gal. 2:11 ff.). The gospel writers do Peter's character no injustice when they represent him at one moment declaring a loyalty to his master that would defy even death itself, and almost in the next breath affirming that he had never known the Nazarene. In the days of his companionship with Jesus undoubtedly Peter had yielded himself to the appeal of the new leader with the same ready abandon that characterized this impulsive individual at all crises in his career.

As Peter's hopes had probably been more lively than those of any other follower of Jesus, so too his sense of disappointment was the keenest. His sudden disillusionment inevitably cut to the very quick of his emotional life. He had good reason to feel keenly about the tragedy. It was not as a mere adventurer that he had taken up work with Jesus. This can hardly have been the easiest course for Peter to pursue. For one who was established in the fishing trade, with a residence of his own in the city of Capernaum, such action must have been preceded by a strong interplay of rival impulses resulting in the fixing of very deep convictions. One does not lightly sever stable social arrangements to enter on a new way of life. But the cherished hope, for which he had been willing to sacrifice everything, had vanished like a morning mist before his eyes when the master, for whom he had left all, was cruelly executed by Roman soldiers.

Just how menacing Peter and his companions now felt the situation in Jerusalem to be we have no means of knowing. Whether they had become sufficiently conspicuous in connection with the arrest and condemnation of Jesus to make it dangerous for them to tarry longer in the city is uncertain. There was still a week of ceremonies in connection with the Feast of Unleavened Bread to which it would be their religious duty to remain, but they would scarcely risk their lives for this purpose. Whether immediately, or some days later, they ultimately returned to Galilee (Mark 16:7)[1] where in the absence of Jesus they were compelled to determine for themselves what their new course of conduct would be. Apparently they felt that the only way open to them was to pick up as best they could the broken threads of those activities in which they had been engaged before they had taken up with Jesus. Now they must try to establish themselves once more in the ordinary routine of life.

The scenes in Galilee can have served only to heighten the disciples' feeling of anguish over the loss of a much-loved and greatly admired leader. Everything around them tended to recall the image of the friend who had been suddenly snatched away at the fatal Passover. In the unfamiliar setting of Jerusalem they might hastily assume that God had forsaken Jesus on the cross. That environment stimulated no recollection of scenes and occasions when in continued association with Jesus they had been inspired with confidence in his future. But the return to Galilee brought back a flood of memories. The disciples recalled occasions when Jesus had talked with a group beside the Sea of Galilee, had addressed a throng in the streets of Capernaum, had conversed with some lone traveler by the wayside, or had taken them apart in a secluded spot for a season of quiet communion with one another and with God. While listening to the incisive precepts of Jesus and experiencing the force of his captivating personality, Peter had been inspired to believe that Jesus was God's chosen hero of the future. Remembering those agitating moments, it was no longer so easy as it had been in Jerusalem for Peter and his companions to surrender their belief that Jesus had stood uniquely high in the favor of the Almighty. Yet there was no escape from the stubborn fact that Jesus, instead of inaugurating a new régime by driving the accursed foreigner out of Palestine, had himself fallen a victim to the oppressor.

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[1] A brief but lucid summary of the debate as to whether the first appearances were in Galilee or Jerusalem may be found in J. M. Creed, *The Gospel According to St. Luke* (London, 1930), pp. 314–18.

Suddenly one day a ray of light broke across this darkened landscape. Where or when or under what circumstances this transforming incident occurred history has not recorded. But it has with quite unusual clearness testified to the fact that Peter was the first to perceive the coming of the dawn. He it was who first saw Jesus alive again. Peter's emotions once more touched the heights.

[illegible] J. & th Gospels

Just as none of the others seems to have sunk so low in the depths of despair, after his heartless denial of discipleship to his beloved leader, so no one else rose so quickly to the summit of restored confidence on returning to the familiar scenes of their former association with Jesus in Galilee. Whether it was in the darkness of a night in a fishing boat on the lake, or in one of those now sacred retreats to which he had gone alone in order that he might revive memories of a former occasion when he and Jesus had been there together, or just what the setting was in which Peter had his first vision of the revived Jesus, has been delicately veiled from our eyes. But one fact stands out with vivid certainty. Peter was now possessed by the unswerving conviction that the crucified Jesus had revealed himself in unmistakable form to this disheartened but yearning disciple.

Peter was not the only one who proved capable of rising to the heights of the new experience. The oldest and the most inclusive account of the appearances of Jesus is given by Paul in a letter to the Corinthians:

> He appeared to Cephas [Peter]; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now but some are fallen asleep, then he appeared to James; then to all the apostles; and last of all . . . . he appeared to me also [I Cor. 15:5–8].

The length of time covered by Paul's catalogue of Jesus' appearances is not made clear to the Corinthians. Paul's conversion to the Christian movement fell not later than three years after the death of Jesus, if indeed it had not occurred at an earlier date. Also, one infers from the apostle's language that the appearance he himself had witnessed was separated from the last appearance to others by a considerable period. It would seem that Paul meant to narrate in chronological order the various appearances known to him. Apparently very soon after Peter had seen Jesus a similar experience was shared by his close associates, whom Paul calls the "twelve." But Paul knew of no further incidents of this sort until a large company of disciples had been assembled, presumably at Jerusalem. One must presuppose some months of missionary labor on the part of Peter and his fellow-enthusiasts to make possible an assembly of five hundred people so sympathetic with the new enterprise that they would be in a state of mind capable of registering a vision of the risen Jesus. Still later, Jesus' brother, James, who ultimately was to succeed Peter as head of the congregation in Jerusalem, experienced a similar vision.

Toward the close of the first century, when the interest in composing gospel narratives was lively, evangelists were accustomed to close their books with an account of events following the crucifixion.

But they were not so much concerned to portray the feelings of these persons who had witnessed the first appearances of Jesus as they were to furnish their readers, no longer in touch with the original disciples, confirmatory evidence of the church's dogma regarding the bodily resurrection of Jesus. Evidence was sought in proof of an empty grave and in events connected with its discovery. The narrators included visits to the tomb, they recorded words of instruction spoken by angels, and they reported that certain women had been given messages to the discouraged disciples. Undoubtedly these stories would have persuasive significance for readers who, if they were Gentiles like the Corinthians, might not take altogether kindly to the notion of a physical resurrection. But the emotional spontaneity of a Peter, lifted out of the depths of despair into the full glow of triumphant reassurance by a vision of Jesus alive again, has unfortunately escaped the grasp of the evangelists. Their accounts lose in realism just in proportion to the degree in which emphasis shifts from the personal experience of the distraught disciple to arguments in support of a particular item in the early church's creed. Peter and his friends were vitally concerned with the appearances, while the writers of the gospels were chiefly interested to demonstrate the dogma of a physical resurrection.

The prominence of resurrection ceremonies in connection with certain heathen cults, popular in territory contiguous to Palestine, tempts one to seek in that quarter incentives for early Christian belief in Jesus' release from the tomb.[1] But when speaking of the primitive group of believers, great caution must be exercised in this connection. The gospel narratives of the resurrection are, it must be remembered, products of a very different environment from that in which Peter and his companions lived. Doubtless he and his friends assumed that the grave had been empty the moment they beheld Jesus in his new glorified estate. This was no wavering opinion but an overwhelming conviction. They felt no need to verify their belief by investigating burial grounds in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. Nor is it probable that one who had been crucified as a criminal by the Romans and forsaken by his closest friends would be buried in any such fashion that they, on recovering their self-control and returning weeks later to the scene of the disaster, could hopefully undertake a search for the grave. Firm in their belief that Jesus has been released from Sheol, a conviction based on his appearances, the necessity of finding an empty sepulcher to prove the validity of their faith would hardly suggest itself to them. The fact that heathen cults were accustomed to display vacant tombs in proof of risen divinities may have influenced the next generation of Christians in the age of gospel-writing, when a successful appeal to Gentiles was of primary importance, but it is not at all likely to have concerned Peter and his associates.

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[1] Cf. S. J. Case, *Experience with the Supernatural in Early Christian Times* (New York, 1929), pp. 121–28.

Peter's certainty was inspired by immediate experience. He needed no supplementary evidence to convince him that Jesus had been released from Sheol. However much later Christians might feel the necessity of accounting in greater detail for the radical transformation that had taken place in the mind of the Galilean fisherman, unquestionably for him it was a purely supernatural phenomenon. He attempted no analytical examination of the psychological and social antecedents conditioning his new state of feeling, and making logically explicable his new assurance. It was enough that he had seen the Risen One. Nor is it at all probable that he would have been troubled by any doubts prompting him to seek less supernatural forms of evidence, such as the possibility of discovering an empty tomb in distant Judea to substantiate a conviction that had been born in a moment of elation when he had personally experienced a vision.

Just as Paul believed in the risen Messiah because he had seen Jesus in the estate of heavenly glory, so also Peter believed that his former companion was alive again because of his glorified reappearance at a critical moment in this disciple's life. Probably Peter would have been even less inclined than Paul to demand secondary evidence. The latter was a man of the schools and therefore more accustomed to summon history and scriptural exegesis to support a cherished opinion. But even for Paul, as certainly for Peter, in the experience itself and not in arguments to demonstrate its possibility resided supreme validity. Later interpreters of these two individuals, so conspicuous in the rise of the new religion, have quite properly sought to discover more specific genetic influences affecting the lives of these leaders as each passed through his great experiential transformation. But it should always be remembered that such inquiries do not represent the point of view and the approach of the men themselves. They were content to assert their personal convictions, on the assumption that the transformation had been wrought in them suddenly by the all-sufficient action of an extraneous divine power. They asked no questions about environmental stimuli conditioning their experience, and they made no analysis of the psychological state making possible a belief in apparitions.

Peter's confidence that he had seen Jesus alive again after the crucifixion is one of the best-attested facts of ancient history. In whatever way the experience is to be explained, in accordance with the demands of present-day thinking, the sincerity of Peter's conviction is not open to question. Similarly, Paul had no doubt regarding the genuineness of Jesus' appearances on at least six different occasions. But even among the faithful gathered at Jerusalem not everyone saw Jesus; nor was it assumed that further manifestations were to be either demanded or expected. These phenomenal demonstrations of Jesus' return to life were allowed to remain the distinctive marks of the early days in the history of the new religious movement. Yet they continued to be regarded fundamental to its existence. The primary duty of a disciple was to bear witness to this belief, whether his testimony rested on personal experience or on tradition received from his predecessors.

Henceforth Peter and his companions had a new outlook on life. Their former perplexity had vanished. They were now in a position to effect an extensive reappraisal of their previous acquaintance with Jesus. Convinced that the martyred prophet had triumphed over death, they were prepared to give a new answer to the question, "Who do men say that I am?"

CHAPTER THREE

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THE NEW MESSIAH

The appearances of Jesus were attended by mighty consequences for Peter and his like-minded associates. In the first place, and most important of all for them, their confidence in Jesus as the divinely chosen deliverer of Israel was now restored. But this belief had to be substantially rephrased to accord with recent happenings. Jesus had shown himself alive again, yet the manifestations were of only brief duration and were relatively infrequent. They were quite insufficient to justify any supposition that he intended to resume on earth a career of association with friends or to engage in a conflict with enemies. The disciples were now forced to abandon outright the hope that Jesus had been selected by God to restore political autonomy to the Jewish people in Palestine. He was no longer an earthly being.

When Jesus had expired on the cross his followers certainly concluded, in accordance with genuinely Jewish ways of thinking, that within a few days his disembodied spirit would descend to its future abode in the lower world. Since the region of the heavens was reserved for God and the angels, normally all deceased men went down to Sheol. There the righteous and the wicked alike found appropriate resting places until the Day of Judgment. Thither Jesus also was assumed to have gone to take his place among the spirits of the departed.

The release of an individual from the Hebrew Sheol was not a thing to be readily imagined. Yet everyone except the Sadducees held firmly to a belief in the substantial reality of departed spirits, and Sadducean skepticism is unthinkable in the case of Peter and his companions. While the crucifixion of Jesus was a crushing blow to his former friends, they would never have imagined death to involve the disintegration of his personality. He was still his true self, although a denizen of the lower regions. Nevertheless he was now lost to them. The possibility of a deceased individual's temporary return to earth might have been suggested by the story of Samuel's reappearance to pronounce doom upon the wicked Saul (I Sam. 28:8–19). But even this incident could have afforded very slight, if any, encouragement to expect a return of Jesus. For Peter an apparition of Jesus was as unexpected as it was astounding. It was without precedent either in his personal experiences or in his Jewish traditions.

Had the disciples of Jesus been Greeks or Romans, it would have been easy for them to anticipate visions of departed friends,[1] and to regard the phenomena with a measure of equanimity. These occurrences were relatively frequent and highly regarded among the Gentiles. Apparitions of supernatural beings, like angels or demons, were familiar to Jews, but the reappearance of dead men was not to be expected, especially after the disembodied spirit had ceased its brief vigil at the tomb and descended to its resting place in Sheol. The deceased saints of Israel were never known to return, as did Jesus, "from among the dead."[2]

Unquestionably Peter took the reappearance of Jesus to be an entirely abnormal phenomenon.

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[1] The beliefs of the ancients about apparitions have been discussed recently by S. J. Case, *Experience with the Supernatural in Early Christian Times* (New York, 1929), pp. 34–66, and Edwyn Bevan, *Sibyls and Seers* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 68–98.

[2] This is the significance of the oft-repeated New Testament phrase ἐκ νεκρῶν implying not simply resurrection from a grave but also release of the individual from Sheol where deceased spirits took up their abode. Also it is significant that no appearance of Jesus had been witnessed prior to the third day. Perhaps Peter's conviction that Jesus, on appearing to him, had come up from the very abode of the dead was a conclusion necessitated by the fact that too much time had elapsed since the crucifixion to render any other supposition possible. According to Paul's information, there had been a period of at least three days, and how much more time he does not say, between the execution of Jesus and his first manifestation to the disciples (I Cor. 15:5). In Paul's day it was believed that Jesus' release from the lower world had occurred on the third day after death, but the evidence for that opinion had to be derived from Scripture. The ap-

This fact made its transforming significance for the disciples only the more powerful. They now believed that Jesus had arisen from Sheol, but not in temporary fashion, as had been the case with Samuel. The liberation of Jesus had been unique. It had been effected, not by the magical rites of some skilful diviner who could bring up the shade of an ancient worthy for momentary consultation, but by the very power of God. Jesus now belonged

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pearances had furnished no argument in the case. Paul does not cite tradition in support of a belief that the tomb had been found empty on the third day, or that the first of the appearances had occurred on this date. The origin of this belief, current in the next generation when the gospels were composed, is obscure. It is true that similar specifications of time occur in reference to the revival of divinities among the Gentiles. It is not inconceivable that, after Peter had seen Jesus and thereby had become convinced of his resurrection, the question of date had been answered on the analogy of a similar event in the career of Osiris or some kindred divinity; but the followers of Jesus may already have discovered sufficient scriptural justification for the idea. Perhaps, indeed, popular Jewish eschatological speculation, as attested in later times, had already fixed on Hos. 6:2 to support the belief that the general resurrection would occur on the third day after the end of the world. In that event an individual application of the idea to Jesus might easily have followed. For the Jewish attestation see H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch* (München, 1922), I, 747; and for the gentile parallels, O. Pfleiderer, *The Early Christian Conception of Christ* (New York, 1905), p. 103; W. Baudissin, *Adonis und Esmun* (Leipzig, 1911), pp. 403–16; J. Leipoldt, *Sterbende und auferstehende Götter* (Leipzig, 1923), pp. 77–80; W. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, 2. Aufl. (Göttingen, 1926), pp. 22–26.

among those exceptional individuals who, through the special favor of the Almighty, had been delivered from the common fate of other mortals destined to remain in the lower regions until the dawn of the Day of Judgment. Jewish tradition knew a few distinguished persons—Enoch and Elijah and Moses—who had been spared a residence in Sheol by being transported directly to the presence of God in the heavens. In this favored position it was possible for them, like ministering angels, to interest themselves in the affairs of the living and to aid God in his kindly purposes toward mankind.

In this area of imagery the disciples, after their visions of Jesus risen—risen not simply from the tomb but from the abode of departed spirits—now found for him a new and worthier rôle. God, who had delivered him from the realm of the dead, had also elevated him to a position of favor and responsibility in the heavens. During his lifetime his followers had heard him talk about the coming Kingdom of Heaven, just as some of them doubtless had heard John also declare that the Day of Judgment was at hand. They earnestly desired to be ready for this catastrophic event, whenever it might happen; yet they had not been averse to believing that even at present God might provide some effective way of release from their troubles. Temporarily their attention had been arrested by the growing popularity of Jesus, and their natural eagerness for quick action further stimulated their imaginations. Without meaning to be irreverent they had, one might say, planned to force God's hand by having him accomplish a deliverance from the Romans through a miraculous display of favor for their present earthly leader. Now they perceived their former mistake, but they pictured for Jesus a more glorious victory. Elevated to a place of honor in heaven, he had become the future Messiah who would presently descend in triumph to redeem the Holy Land from all its distresses and gather the faithful into the coming Kingdom. Henceforth, the disciples served the risen Jesus with a new loyalty, all the greater because of their release from the agonies of recent disappointment.

Jesus, raised to heaven and inducted into the office of apocalyptic Messiah, now commanded the first attention of such of his former disciples as shared this new faith. That there were other friends of Jesus who still prized his memory and cherished the words that he had spoken, but who had not experienced the emotional exaltation of Peter and his close associates, is probably a fact too What basi
readily overlooked today. But certainly the Petrine company was by far the more aggressive, and to it must be credited the energy and initiative that insured for the new cause initial success and growing strength. These enthusiasts, now conscious of a very definite mission, gave themselves with much

zeal to the discharge of their duties. We happen to be familiar with Paul's state of mind after his sudden conversion on the way to Damascus. It meant for him a complete reversal of purpose involving God-imposed obligations to be discharged with the utmost fidelity. When Paul says that Peter had been similarly equipped and commissioned for a new task, we may properly assume that Peter took his responsibilities quite as seriously as did Paul (Gal. 2:8).

The way open to Peter and his companions was now plain. Their primary task was to make ready for the coming of the new Messiah. Since they seem to have thought his advent momentarily impending, haste in their preparatory activities was essential. The place of his appearing would be Jerusalem, indeed the very temple area (Mal. 3:1f.), hence it was incumbent upon them as speedily as possible so to adjust their living arrangements that they might take up residence in the Holy City. Doubtless it would be easier now than when they had first become followers of Jesus to dispose of their affairs in Galilee, but it surely would be difficult for them to earn a livelihood under urban conditions. They were peasants from the villages or fishermen from the shores of the Sea of Galilee, who might reasonably expect to find the problem of subsistence in Jerusalem soon becoming acute. But for the moment these material obstacles were of little or no concern to them. It was their duty to be present when the Messiah came, and Jerusalem was the place to await his coming.

The disciples in Jerusalem immediately undertook to make ready for the advent of the new messianic king. Since he was to be Israel's long-awaited deliverer, they must prepare their contemporaries for the great consummation. At first this may have seemed to them a comparatively easy task. They assumed that it would only be necessary to narrate their recent experiences in order to persuade their kinsmen that Jesus had been elevated to a position of high favor in heaven. But again, as when earlier they had hoped Jesus would show himself to be a Davidic king, their untutored zeal inspired a false expectation of success. Time soon demonstrated that far fewer people than they had hoped were ready to follow their lead. Presently they found themselves constituting a specific unit in Jewish society, with a community consciousness made more vivid by the persistent hostility of their neighbors. The very necessity of self-preservation compelled them to form a separate group. Thus the coming deliverer of all Israel became the Messiah for the members of their distinctive community. In other words, they themselves were now the true Israel, and entrance into the impending Kingdom could be insured only by attachment to their brotherhood.

The new movement, now differentiated from Judaism at large, gradually developed a structure of its own. Since its members assumed that they represented the true Israel, their institutional technique followed closely the Jewish model. The leaders of the new cause remained close to the temple where the Messiah was to appear. They adhered faithfully to the legal ceremonies of Judaism, even winning admiration for their piety among people who rejected their preaching. When Paul introduced elements of Hellenistic liberalism into the propaganda the leaders at Jerusalem were his doughty opponents. But the new society also needed distinctive marks if it were to maintain a separate existence. These were not lacking. At an early date the group recognized certain officials, the twelve "pillars," as Paul calls them. It had a memorial feast, the purpose of which was, as Paul again reports, "to show forth the Lord's death till he come." Probably, also, it early chose as a rite of initiation a form of baptism modeled after that practiced by John.

The institutional developments in what may be called the first Christian church of Jerusalem were all devised with a view to preparing for the coming of Jesus as apocalyptic Messiah. His followers now appropriated from Daniel and Enoch a new imagery to describe their hopes. While they were no longer able to make the earthly Jesus a prospective successor to David, still they could with new fervor proclaim the Risen One to be the true Messiah whom God would send in heavenly power, as forecast by apocalyptic seers, to inaugurate the new age (Dan. 7:13; I Enoch, chaps. 46–71; Mark 8:38; 14:62).

If Jesus had returned in apocalyptic splendor to establish his rule in Jerusalem at the Pentecost following the crucifixion, or at the next Passover, his followers would have been spared a great deal of trouble. Each postponement of their hopes involved them in new tasks. As former friends of the slain prophet their duties were not onerous, but as earthly representatives of the new Messiah in heaven their responsibilities rapidly multiplied. We must not assume that they thought it incumbent upon them to bring the Kingdom to realization in modern fashion, through attainments in personal religious living and the perfecting of an ecclesiastical institution. The establishment of the Kingdom was to be emphatically the Messiah's work, not theirs, and was not to be accomplished until the day of his appearing. But it was their duty to prepare for his advent. They were under obligation, not only to announce his imminent manifestation, but to carry on a vigorous missionary propaganda for the increase of their numbers in order that he might be greeted by a suitable company of expectant subjects. Their crucial problem was to persuade their countrymen to recognize in Jesus the future deliverer from bondage to the Romans.

It was by no means easy for a few Galilean peasants to devise for their new cause a type of presentation that would convince their Jewish kinsmen. The chief task was to transform memories of the earthly Jesus into an effective appeal for faith in his future triumph. At the outset the disciples had no very keen personal interest in bridging the gap between the lowly carpenter from Nazareth and the Messiah now in heaven. Confident that their new belief was fully justified by visions of the risen Jesus, their gaze was directed toward the future. But in the case of persons who had not experienced a vision, it was necessary to present arguments to convince the skeptical. Christian preachers, when reviewing the story of Jesus' career in the light of their more recent experience, were often able to shed a flood of fresh light on the past. They were troubled by no fears lest they obscure the real figure of the earthly Jesus by imposing upon him the glory of the heavenly Messiah. If they had any anxiety whatsoever, it was a fear lest they might be unable to discover in his activities on earth features commensurate with the full measure of their present confidence in his new dignity.

It was a tremendous undertaking to prove to the Jewish people of Palestine that the crucified Jesus had become their God-appointed deliverer. History soon demonstrated that the attempt was futile, but apparently at first the early Christians failed to realize the enormity of their task. In the glow of their new-found confidence they mistakenly assumed a readiness on the part of their kinsmen to credit their testimony regarding the appearances of Jesus and to accept their interpretation of his person. When time proved that further arguments were needed, the disciples heroically undertook their production. Demonstrations were drawn from two principal sources. On the one hand, the preachers retold more effectively the story of Jesus' earthly career, and, on the other, they cited an increasing array of scriptural passages in support of their opinions. They were not trained exegetes, yet, like every Jew who had grown up under the shadow of the synagogue, they were well acquainted with the sacred books. From this treasure-house of memory they were able to bring forth numerous texts in support of their faith in the messiahship of Jesus.

One of the most formidable barriers to the success of Christian preaching was the stumblingblock of the crucifixion. In contemporary Jewish thinking a martyred Messiah was an anomaly. Heroic efforts were necessary to explain away the stigma of the cross. For the disciples themselves the difficulty had been removed automatically by their visions of the risen Jesus. His death had been necessary to his heavenly exaltation, a veritable blessing in disguise. But to one who had not witnessed a vision, it might well have seemed ridiculous to claim messiahship for a teacher who had been executed by the Romans. Paul knew whereof he spoke when he testified that the cross was, to those Jews who had not yet come within the Christian fold, a serious obstacle to faith. Paul also indicated the line of attack that his predecessors had adopted in attempting to remove this hindrance to their cause. They employed a genuinely Jewish means of finding worth in the martyr death of Jesus. No other peoples of the ancient world had learned so well the religious values attaching to suffering. Pious Israelites counted it a glory to die in the cause of righteousness and for their fellow-men. Naturally, the disciples of Jesus claimed for him this same distinction. They preached that he had died for the sake of his sinful contemporaries and in fulfilment of the Scriptures (I Cor. 15:3). In the sight of God the crucifixion had not been a calamity but a significant event in strict accord with the divine purposes.

Heroic as were their efforts, apparently the earliest Christian missionaries were not very successful in persuading their Palestinian hearers that it was the business of the Messiah to be a vicarious sufferer on behalf of the Jews. Rather, he should have been their avenger against enemies. And this, too, is what the Christian preachers themselves had originally believed. For, according to their thinking, Jesus had died as a martyr and not as a Messiah, and therefore the later Christian notion of a messianic function to be discharged through an atoning death can hardly have been a primary feature in the disciples' imagery. They did not suppose that death was a proof of messiahship. It was enough for them to undertake, on the strength of scriptural texts, to show that the crucifixion was not really inconsistent with a messianic appreciation of Jesus' activity in the future. In giving himself to his cause so loyally as to incur a martyr's death he had been rendering an important service to his own kinsmen. Yet this was not specifically a messianic performance; it was only a premessianic act. Having submitted to this indignity, God had rewarded his exemplary humility by elevating him to a position of lordship second only to that of the Almighty himself (Phil. 2:5–11). It was through his resurrection that he had been "made Christ [Messiah]" (Acts 2:36).

Not only Jesus' death but the whole course of his earthly career needed to be redeemed from the commonplace, in order to constitute a more fitting prelude to his dignity as the heavenly Messiah. How far the members of the community at Jerusalem carried forward the attempt to reset the life of the historical Jesus in a messianic framework is now very difficult to determine. By the time the New Testament gospels had been composed the process was well advanced. While certain elements in the representation are clearly of gentile origin, there are many features in the accounts that presuppose a Jewish environment, whether they were worked out by the early preachers in Jerusalem or by other missionaries to Jewish congregations. Characteristics of Jesus' life and work that could be cited to show his superior authority in comparison with that of Moses were quite appropriate to the situation. Even though he had not fulfilled literally the program of a Davidic Messiah, there was psychological value in reminding Jewish hearers that the expected deliverer when formerly on earth had possessed certain Davidic credentials. It was in point to remark that he had been born in Bethlehem, the City of David, and that his father, Joseph, was also of Davidic descent.

It was of still greater importance to show that the course of Jesus' earthly career had not been an accidental affair, but a divinely ordered exhibition of heavenly wisdom. If the Christian preachers could persuade their Jewish audiences that a very definite plan of God had been in operation throughout the whole of Jesus' earthly career, preparing the way for his exaltation to heaven, there might be a better prospect of convincing unbelievers that Jesus was worthy of faith. The assumption that Jesus himself had fully understood God's program was a prerequisite to this entire method of reasoning. Accordingly, much stress was laid on Jesus' predictions and affirmations with respect to his official status, even though it had to be generally admitted that his closest disciples at the time had failed to comprehend his meaning.

Evidences of God's approval for the earthly Jesus, when such could be discovered, were of much value for defenders of his present messiahship. One destined ultimately for a position of unparalleled honor in heaven would, it might reasonably be assumed, experience during his lifetime some very unusual displays of the divine favor. Such were early noted. His baptismal experience lent itself readily to an officialized interpretation of his mission. By means of certain miraculous displays in connection with the ceremony Jesus had at that moment been assured by heaven of his future triumph. The confidence with which he moved forward in his work, acting under his prophetic consciousness of a divine summons to combat the forces of evil about him, inspired his disciples in later times to affirm that Jesus while on earth had been approved of God by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him. And, as a final demonstration of divine favor, God had raised him from the dead and transported him to heaven. Ultimately, Christians believed that Jesus wrought his miracles by virtue of the divinity resident in his own nature, and that by his own power he had effected his release from Sheol; but this type of thinking involved a more complete identification of the earthly Jesus with the glorified Messiah than is likely to have been accomplished within strictly Jewish circles.

However much the early Christian preachers in Palestine might magnify the earthly Jesus in the interest of creating faith in him as the Christ, now exalted to a position of divine authority in heaven, it is not at all probable that they ever assigned him an equal measure of dignity while he was on earth. In heaven he was superior to all apotheosized Roman rulers and ultimately would demonstrate his power by returning in triumph. But on earth he had been no deified Jewish emperor. Such authority as he had possessed was a special endowment of God, rather than a native quality of being or a unique constitution of personality differentiating him from other mortals.

Not even Paul, although he assumed for the earthly Jesus a previous existence in heaven, represents him living as a deity on earth. His life had been one of model humility, in which all his previous heavenly prerogatives had been laid aside. He had emptied himself of pre-earthly authority and had become strictly identified with the lot of humanity. His apotheosis had followed the resurrection, but it was God who had raised him from among the dead and had endowed him with new dignity. His elevation to heaven was God's reward, and not the inevitable outcome of a divine energy resident in Jesus' own person (Phil. 2:5–11). Paul remained to the end of his career too truly a son of the Hebrews ever to adopt outright the characteristically gentile imagery of incarnate deities.

In the faith of his Jewish followers Jesus continued to be the lowly Nazarene elevated to new messianic dignity in heaven after his death. While adumbrations of his future glory had been more or less abundantly displayed during his earthly career, the full exhibition of his redeeming work was yet to be revealed on his return from heaven. However clearly God had indicated that the historical Jesus had been the unique object of the divine good pleasure, his effective inauguration of the Kingdom still remained a future event. On earth he was Messiah only potentially, or prospectively; he was yet to come as Messiah in reality.

While the hope of his return was vividly retained, the disciples were content to trust the future for the convincing demonstration of Jesus' title to the dignity of Messiah. For years they continued to preach that his advent was certain and imminent. Watchfulness was a fundamental Christian virtue. Like a thief under cover of darkness the Messiah would catch the careless unprepared. The light was to be kept constantly trimmed and burning. Paul admonishes his converts to forego social entanglements and family responsibilities, for the Lord is at hand and it will be only a short time now until all these earthly relationships are dissolved.

Repeated disappointments failed to shatter this confidence in Jesus' imminent advent. While his earthly companions still lived they cherished the hope of his coming during their lifetime (Mark 9:1). When missionary activity broadened to include Gentiles, an extension of time seemed necessary to complete this new labor (Mark 13:10). But already before the year 60 Paul believed that if he could make an evangelistic trip to Spain the work of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles would be pretty well accomplished (Rom. 15:19–28). The time was very near when those who had been impatiently looking for the appearing of Jesus from heaven would be rewarded by the fulfilment of their supreme desire. The martyred prophet is assured of an early vindication in the rôle of the new apocalyptic Messiah.

CHAPTER FOUR

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THE DEIFIED HERO

The emotional life of the Jewish people, particularly in Palestine, had been stirred to its depths by the growing disposition among the ruling classes to glorify Roman emperors. The readiness of the Herods to build imperial sanctuaries was not the only offense against popular sentiment. Even the temple authorities at Jerusalem had compromised with heathenism by adding sacrifices for the emperor and for Rome to the daily rites of the Jews. That the money to purchase victims—two lambs and a bull each day—was provided by the conqueror seemed a praiseworthy fact to apologists like Philo and Josephus, but the common man could find little if any consolation in this use of a portion of the tribute exacted from the subjugated people.[1]

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[1] Josephus (*Apion* ii. 77) says that the sacrifices regularly offered for emperors were paid for by the Jews themselves, but in *War* ii. 197 he states that the rulers bore the expense. Either statement could be true, depending on the point of view taken at the moment. Philo (*Gaius* xxiii. 157; xl. 317) also comments on the generosity of this provision by the Roman government. But undoubtedly the expense had been borne directly by the Jews when, on the accession of Gaius in A.D. 37, they hastened to be the first among his subjects to offer in

For Palestinian Jews, with their religiously sensitive temperament, Roman domination meant far more than the mere imposition of a disagreeable financial burden in the form of tribute. It involved the people in idolatrous associations that seemed an intolerable profanation of their Holy Land and a transgression of their most sacred duty to God. The reverence due him was more and more seriously menaced by the pressure of the imperial cult. All through the early part of the first century A.D. the people became increasingly concerned with the question of whether they should submit to Caesar or take up arms in defense of their country and their faith. Josephus severely censures Judas of Galilee for igniting the flames of revolution that some sixty years later brought destruction on the Jewish nation. But Judas was certainly voicing a growing popular sentiment when he admonished his contemporaries to give God first place and refuse allegiance to any other "ruler and lord." When at last the revolutionary forces gained control in Jerusalem, the abolition of the sacrifice for Caesar, although contrary to the advice of the high priest and other Jewish dignitaries, was one of their first acts. And, after the fall of Jerusalem, the loyalists

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their temple special sacrifices for the welfare of the new ruler. Philo knew of two later occasions on which a similar act was performed (*ibid.* xxxii. 231; xlv. 356). In Philo's day it was also the custom to pray for emperors at the services in the synagogues (*Flaccus* vii. 49).

who escaped to Egypt were still true to their ideals. No terrors of punishment, not even threats of death, could induce them or their children to "confess Caesar to be their lord."[1]

During Jesus' lifetime such of his Galilean followers as had imagined that he would deliver Israel from the Romans certainly would have been sympathetic with the declaration of Judas that it was cowardly on the part of the Jews to submit complacently to Rome, thus relegating God to a secondary place by acknowledging a mortal man to be Lord. Had not the disciples joined Jesus in the work of preparing for an approaching Day of Judgment when God would inaugurate the Kingdom of Heaven, they would have been excellent material for revolutionary agitation by those zealous nationalists whose activities Josephus consistently deplores. But for the moment the hopes of the disciples were centered wholly on Jesus. While he was with them they set him over against the ruling Caesar by visualizing an early political triumph in which he, through the favor of God, would restore the lost dignity of the throne of David. His death halted only temporarily their nationalistic ambitions. Once he had been raised from the dead and exalted to heaven, his authority was all the greater. He was now more truly than ever the implacable enemy of all despotic and deified Caesars. In the near future he would return to overthrow the kingdom of the Romans and establish in its stead the Kingdom of God.

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[1] The relevant passages in Josephus are *War* ii. 118 and 409 f.; vii. 410–19; *Ant.* xviii. 4–10 and 23. While he always uses the Greek word δεσπότης rather than κύριος for "lord," it is evident from the context that he is referring to the familiar notion of confessing the lordship of the emperor in a religious sense. Also, when speaking of the self-deification of Gaius, Josephus uses δεσπότης and θεός as equivalents (*Ant.* xix. 6). Perhaps he refrained from writing κύριος because readers of the Greek Bible knew it as a proper name rather than as a mere title applied to the God of the Jews. Yet the use of δεσπότης implied no depreciation of the emperor's dignity. Cassius Dio (lxiii. 1–5) employs it in connection with Tiridates' worship of Nero, and undoubtedly Josephus had used it in the same dignified sense.

The company of believers that reassembled in Jerusalem awaited intently the coming of the Messiah from heaven. Their fondest hopes for themselves and their kinsmen were fixed on this expected event. It would mean the overthrow of all the governments of this world and the final establishment of God's own rule over his faithful ones. The new age was at hand. Its approach was foreshadowed by unusual signs of the times and by recent fulfilments of prophecy. The stirring experiences through which the bereft followers of Jesus had just passed induced a state of emotional elevation that clearly indicated to them the arrival of the last days when God was to pour out his Spirit in superabundant measure. Having been conspicuously the recipients of his favor, they eagerly anticipated the moment when the Messiah would appear. In their Aramaic mother-tongue they besought Jesus, now sitting in lordly estate at the right hand of God in heaven, to hasten his coming. They fervently prayed "Maranatha" ("Our Lord, come"). The answer to that petition would mean the final deliverance of Israel from subjection to any present or future heathen overlord. The very Jesus whom the Romans had executed was now himself a lord in the heavens and at his early appearing would prove the nemesis of all Caesars.

To find supreme religious meaning in the figure of a deceased man who had passed triumphantly through the experience of death and had been elevated to a position of heavenly dignity was certainly a very unusual procedure for persons of Jewish blood and training. It is easier to explain the antecedents of Paul's new conviction, since one must suppose that during his period of active persecution he had come in contact with individuals who declared themselves convinced that Jesus had arisen and ascended to heaven. Paul's vision of the glorified Jesus was not, therefore, a totally new discovery of something with which he was not already partially familiar. Although Paul does not willingly acknowledge any large measures of debt to others, but insists on making the glorified Messiah directly responsible for the Pauline gospel, one may not deny the influence on Paul of contacts with predecessors who were already depicting in their preaching essentially the same risen Jesus by whom Paul was ultimately captivated.

With Peter the situation is quite different. What incentives could have led him to visualize the messianic redeemer of the Jews in the form of an apotheosized hero-savior? It is true, indeed, that the gospels ascribe this notion to Jesus himself and represent that he had predicted his death, his resurrection, his exaltation to heaven, and his triumphant return. It was impossible for the early church at the time the gospels were written to imagine that Peter and his companions could have made any worthy discovery about Jesus that had not already been a possession of the Master's thought prior to his death. But the stupidity of the disciples in failing to perceive his mind is an equally emphasized feature of the narrative, and one apparently still too well known to be ignored in the gospel-making age. The disciples themselves bore indubitable testimony to their utter failure to comprehend Jesus on those occasions when he was assumed to have predicted his impending death, to be followed by his early resurrection. They were said to have questioned among themselves "what the arising from the dead means" (Mark 9:10). Or, again, Jesus' closest associates "understood not the saying and were afraid to ask him"; "it was concealed from them that they should not perceive it" (Mark 9:31 f.; Luke 9:45).

As a matter of fact, reference to his resurrection and exaltation to heaven were quite out of place on Jesus' lips, until one ascribed to him that revised type of thinking put forward by the disciples in the days following their visions of him risen. Only by imposing upon him their later state of mind were they able to assume that he had vaguely forecast the events of the interim and had spoken in veiled terms of messianic dignity awaiting him in the future. Since the preachers of the new religion now declared that the crucified Jesus had become the glorified Messiah on whom all must believe in order to be saved in the Day of Judgment, it was as essential to their present assurance, as it was valuable for their propaganda, to suppose that Jesus himself had authorized their new interpretation of his career. Yet it had to be conceded that their present way of viewing Jesus had been utterly foreign to the thinking of his followers previous to the crucifixion. At least so far as they were concerned, their new messianic faith was a consequence, and not an antecedent, of belief in the resurrection of Jesus attested by his reappearances.[1]

Had Peter been a Greek rather than a Jew, he would have had a much readier susceptibility for the religious values attaching to the person of one who had passed by the way of death to a position of honor and power in the heavens. The religious significance of apotheosized mortals, long a familiar concept among Gentiles, had grown rapidly in popularity and diffused itself widely about the eastern end of the Mediterranean during the years following the meteoric career of Alexander the Great. This disposition was further accelerated by the establishment of the Roman Empire, when all eyes were centered upon a unique individual who, as master of the whole known world, had abolished the social chaos resulting from civil strife and had restored to humanity a stable order of existence. Both the fondness of the Greeks for deified heroes and the readiness of the Orientals to make politics an affair of the deity now enjoyed a wide popularity.

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[1] See above, p. 24, n. 1.

Among the Jews it was entirely natural to hope for political deliverance by divine intervention and to describe the ideal king as one especially anointed by God to administer the affairs of the state. It was appropriate also for an apocalyptic seer to predict that God, by an especial act of interference in the order of the world, would himself descend from heaven to effect the salvation of his people. Sometimes, though less frequently, it was assumed that God would send from a heaven vicegerent to represent him in the establishment of the apocalyptic kingdom. But to imagine that a deceased man should be transformed into a divinized messianic hero worthy of the prayers and the praise of his disciples involved a state of mind entirely unnatural to Jews, or at least to such as were schooled in customary ways of thinking.[1] Had not the followers of Jesus been "unlearned and ignorant men," probably they would have realized more keenly the futility of attempting to convert any large numbers of Palestinian Jews to belief in a Messiah who was a crucified man raised to a position of divine authority in heaven.

!! [illegible]
[illegible] men
ignorant

Undoubtedly Peter would have resented the suggestion that his beliefs were to any degree inspired by non-Jewish religious influences. He would have maintained as stoutly as did Paul that he was a true Hebrew and that the new dignity claimed for the Christian Messiah belonged strictly within the limits of genuinely Jewish revelation. This psychology is characteristic of every individual who is sensitive to his immediate environment, while at the same time he honestly professes loyalty to the inheritance of his fathers. When a social setting is such that it provides fresh incentives, awakens new interests, enlarges religious horizons, and demands original interpretations, everyone who possesses any measure of spiritual sensitivity and creative power is inevitably affected by the new stimuli. Quickly, though unconsciously, accretions are made to the heritages from the past, but in such fashion that they seem to be a normal part of one's own religion and to belong quite properly among one's traditional inheritances.

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[1] Jewish opinions are summarized in S. J. Case, *The Millennial Hope* (Chicago, 1918), pp. 80–98; cf. also J. Klausner, *Die messianischen Vorstellungen des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter der Tannaiten* (Berlin, 1904).

An educated man accustomed to think in academic ways, like a Jewish Philo or a Christian Justin, may be more keenly aware of the menace of novelties, but he is none the less their victim. He excuses his liberality by a characteristic apologetic. Whatever in Greek philosophy or in a contemporary mystery cult seems to him valuable in his experience he proceeds to find authenticated in Scripture. The fact that his sacred text has to be freely interpreted in order to justify the new interest causes him no difficulty. On the contrary, his ability to find heretofore undiscovered meanings in the ancient record yields an additional satisfaction. This was the type of psychology that made it possible for Philo in all good conscience to maintain that the wisdom of Heraclitus and of the Stoics had been anticipated by Moses, chief of philosophers, and for Justin to declare that the rites of the Mithraic cult had been derived from a similarly sacred source.[1]

ven Dr. Case!

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[1] Philo *Creation of World* ii. 8; *Heir of Divine Things* xliii. 214; *Allegories* i. 33 (108); *Posterity of Cain* xxxix. 133; Justin *Apol.* I. 44, 54, 59, 66; *Dial.* 70.

The uneducated man is far less likely to feel the need for an apologetic defense of items paralleled in cults that lie outside the area of his proper patronage. Perhaps he is usually unaware of any similarity. In the course of life's varied contacts he is impinged upon by many forces that leave their mark on his emotional life. These experiences awaken attitudes and interests necessitating new types of religious satisfaction and demanding the use of previously unappreciated imagery. Ultimately his personal experiences crystallize around new centers which to him no longer appear foreign or improper. Or, perhaps, the new accretions gather about old centers with which they quickly become integrated in the processes of real life. Extraneous items are so readily absorbed into the unity of one's experience that the course of development goes on quite unconsciously. New contacts make new demands upon the technique of religion, and the common man, even when devoutly attached to the faith of his fathers, always finds it possible to make the adjustment that will permit his traditional practices and beliefs to measure up to the demands of his present situation. The unschooled man finds this change easier to effect just because it can be accomplished without conscious struggle.

Under these circumstances new stimuli come mainly from the area of ordinary daily contacts. Teachers and books play comparatively little if any part in the process. The chief medium of influence is a person whom one may meet quite casually. Perhaps he is a companion in toil, a fellow-artisan, a chance acquaintance encountered when on a journey, a customer or a merchant met in the course of the day's business, or any other person whose religious life draws its inspiration from sources other than one's own. Under these conditions the germ of a foreign religion easily spreads. Its new victims find the inoculation painless, if not indeed exhilarating, and even when sorely smitten by the disease they may stoutly refuse to recognize the presence of a foreign substance in their systems.

To imagine that Peter and his associates had been influenced by gentile beliefs in apotheosized mortals and hero-saviors would be to suppose a much wider operation of foreign cults within the experience of the populace in Galilee than has commonly been assumed. But the degree to which outside religions are likely to have permeated Palestine, and Galilee in particular, by the beginning of the Christian Era is not always fully appreciated. As a matter of fact, the very vigor with which the Jews declared their determination to maintain the purity of their ancestral religion implies an impact from without much more severe than that usually admitted. Assuming, as is quite properly done, that the Jews were so loyal to their inherited faith that they would fiercely resist the deliberate or

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compulsory adoption of any foreign religion, we are prone to infer that they were completely successful in their efforts to keep rival cults from entering the society of Palestine. But no matter how violent their protest might be or how diligently they guarded against conscious contamination from without, they could not possibly avoid a multitude of contacts with the infected society by which they were environed. While one is quite ready nowadays to recognize the presence in Palestine of large numbers of foreigners mingling with the Jewish population, particularly in the chief centers, the presence of the gentile cults in this setting is less frequently stressed; and the possibility that they may have exerted a somewhat effective influence among the people in the cities and villages and country districts has thus far scarcely been taken seriously. It is a theme that deserves more careful consideration.

The vigorous activity of gentile religious interests within Palestine in the early imperial age is a very important fact for the student of Christian origins. Particularly is it significant for study of that special type of interest centering around the apotheosized hero and the dying and reviving divinity.

With characteristic exaggeration Josephus tells us that Herod the Great had built temples in honor of the emperor at every place in Palestine where a favorable site offered and had thus filled the country with buildings devoted to emperor worship.

Suspicious as one may well be of the rhetoric of Josephus, there is no reason to doubt the general accuracy of his statement. Herod wisely refrained from demanding that Jews worship the ruler, yet he introduced the imperial cult into many parts of his kingdom. Magnificent temples dedicated to Caesar set before the eyes of the people the religious values popularly associated with the notion of a deified prince as head of the Roman Empire. In this vivid manner the kingdom of the Romans was depicted as the régime of a new god elevated from the ordinary status of mortals to a position of divine authority here upon earth and exalted to heaven after his death.

The erection of temples was not the only form in which Herod the Great had introduced into Palestine the seductive imagery of emperor worship. He reverentially designated many a foundation *Sebaste* (*Augusta*) to typify the imperial majesty. He also instituted games to be celebrated every fifth year in honor of Caesar, and he constructed a theater at Jerusalem and a large amphitheater near the city. Here celebrations were staged in characteristic Roman fashion, which meant elaborate religious displays, not only in glorification of the emperor himself, but also in recognition of other divinities popular in heathen rites.

Herod's sons were not so prodigal as their father had been in erecting monuments to Caesar, but foreign influences continued to press into the territory quite as significantly during this period as before. Within the domains of Herod Antipas there were large gentile elements in the population of cities like Sepphoris, Tiberias, or Taricheae. These foreigners who had been encouraged to take up residence in Palestine certainly had been permitted to bring with them their native religions. At Panium, near the source of the river Jordan north of Caesarea Philippi, Philip built a magnificent temple of white marble in honor of Caesar, a fact which may have had significance for the rise of the tradition regarding Peter's first ascription of messiahship to Jesus. It was reported that while in this territory Peter had declared Jesus to be Israel's promised deliverer who deserved to be rebuked for his lack of political ambitions (Mark 8:29, 32). Could Peter have had his way, Jesus, by establishing in Palestine his own régime to supplant the Roman Empire, would have shown himself more worthy of reverence than any deified Caesar.

The patronage of foreign cults by the rulers, significant as it was for the people of the country, was not the only channel by which extraneous religious influences came into Palestine. Foreign settlers who took their place among the common people, or occupied positions of responsibility in society, were an even more serious menace to the purity of Jewish religion. This process of infiltration had begun many years before. Even as early as the time of the Maccabean princes it had been customary to employ foreign mercenaries in the Jewish army, and it was never possible to deny a soldier his favorite religion. At a still earlier date, in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, the worship of Dionysus was so thoroughly at home in Judea that the Syrian king felt it entirely proper to make the rites of this popular Greek divinity the new state religion to supplant Judaism (II Macc. 6:7). At one time there was in Jerusalem itself a temple of Dionysus,[1] who was reputed to have lived on earth where he traveled widely as a benefactor of mankind until he passed by way of death to the divine sphere in heaven where he now watched over the welfare of his devotees.

It is not surprising that cities in Palestine and in its contiguous territory should have traced their origin to Dionysus.[2] At Scythopolis, the largest city of the Decapolis and in the very heart of Palestine, pagan religion had been flourishing for centuries before the rise of Christianity. Here the worship of Dionysus was particularly in favor. Tradition reported that he had given his surname "Nysa" to the city, and had taken up his abode there in order to guard the grave of his nurse.[1] The remains of his temple discovered in modern excavations on this site also bear witness to his original influence. His popularity in the territory is further attested by the fact that in later legend several cities in the region made him responsible for their foundation. Even Damascus is placed in this class, although in all probability the patron god of its people was not originally Dionysus, but was his Arabian counterpart, Dusares. So widespread was the worship of Dionysus in Palestine that in the early imperial period Gentiles, lacking a sufficiently keen eye for the distinctive character of the Jewish God, were disposed to identify him with this Greek deity.[2] Certainly his cult, which Jerome found flourishing at Bethlehem in the fourth century A.D., was no late importation into Palestine. Indeed, there is a silver coin, assigned to the fifth century B.C., which contains the very name of the Jewish God, Jahweh, with his image unmistakably portrayed after the likeness of Dionysus.[1]

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[1] See O. Kern, *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*, XXII (1924), 198 f., and H. Willrich, *ibid.*, XXIV (1926), 170 ff.; also H. Gressmann, *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, Neue Folge, II (1925), 16 f. For the presence of the cult of Dionysus in Palestine and its environs see especially V. Macchioro, *Orfismo e Paolinismo* (Montevarchi, 1922), pp. 60 f., 305 ff.; *Zagreus: Studi intorno all'orfismo* (Firenze, 1930), p. 482; and his article "Orphism and Paulinism" in the *Journal of Religion*, VIII (1928), 349–60.

[2] For data see E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, 4. Aufl. (Leipzig, 1907), II, 35 (Caesarea), 37 and 56 (Damascus), 38 f. and 56 (Scythopolis), and 55 (Raphia).

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[1] Pliny *Natural History* v. 18 (74); E. Schürer, *op. cit.*, II, 171, n. 320.

[2] Plutarch (*Symposiacs* iv. 6) lists a series of parallelisms between the Jewish ceremonies and the rites of Dionysus that seemed to him absolute proof of the identity of the two cults. On the other hand, Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 5) believes this popular notion to be incorrect because the worship of Dionysus is festive and joyous while the Jewish rites are somber and repellent—to Tacitus.

From very early times there had been many gods of the type of Dionysus, who were reputed to have passed from earth to heaven, and were now honored with long-established rites in the countries surrounding Palestine. Visitors and immigrants from Arabia, Asia Minor, Syria, Phoenicia, or Egypt would most naturally bring with them exactly this type of religious interest and imagery. The worship of these deceased and divinized heroes was especially in favor about the eastern end of the Mediterranean under the Romans. While Greek and Roman writers often identify these gods with the well-known figure of Dionysus, it is perfectly apparent that they were indigenous to particular territories, where they were revered under distinctive names, although they all served their devotees in much the same manner. Originally they had been closely related to men, but through death and restoration to life they had become heroic figures, who because of their new divine power were able to mediate help in an especial measure to their needy devotees. In consequence of their former connection with mortals they could be assumed to feel a keener interest in the welfare of mankind than that which might naturally be the case with the greater and older divinities. Typical of this class of hero-gods are Dusares of the Arabians, Attis among the Phrygians, Sandan of Tarsus, Adonis of Syria, and Osiris of Egypt. As people from these surrounding lands came into Palestine in larger numbers during the early imperial age, certainly they brought with them the worship of these dying and reviving divinities. Whether worshipers revered them under their original names or under the name of Dionysus, already widely known in Palestine, did not greatly matter. In any event, the pressure of foreigners into Jewish territory must have given a new impetus to this type of religion, particularly among the common people.

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[1] J. Leipoldt, *Die Religionen in der Umwelt des Urchristentums* (Leipzig, 1926), Fig. 81.

When Christians pictured the Jewish Messiah in the form of a deceased mortal raised to heaven, they may have been wholly unconscious of borrowing from a foreign source. But henceforth the hoped-for savior of the Hebrew race could qualify more effectively than ever before as a rival of some of the most popular divinities worshiped at the time by Gentiles. He was still to function in accordance with a distinctly Jewish program of messianic deliverance, but death and revivification were his new credentials.

What [illegible]ness!

But they are the facts.

How could Peter have arrived at a state of mind so thoroughly un-Jewish as to imagine that a Messiah in the likeness of an apotheosized man, a hero raised from earth to heaven, was to represent the great God of the Jewish people in effecting their deliverance? Doubtless had Peter been asked this question he would have replied that this new imagery was his own personal discovery; it had come to him in a revelation from heaven, mediated through ! a vision of Jesus risen. But a more analytical research will inevitably ask what may have been the er imagination effect of Peter's conversations with some neighbor accustomed to attend the Dionysus ceremonies in the adjacent city of Scythopolis. Or one may question whether the current imagery of an emperor, deified as lord of the universe and head of that great kingdom now oppressing Jews, against which men like Judas of Galilee or other enthusiasts were eager to revolt, may not also have stimulated the imagination of Peter when he thought upon the contrast between Jesus crucified and that prospective leader of a triumphant revolution which he had previously visualized. It had burst upon him in a ! moment of intense emotion that the crucified Jesus had been more legitimately apotheosized and made vastly more powerful than any Roman emperor or any immortalized Dionysus.

No one in his right mind will imagine that Peter sat down meditatively to consider the different features in contemporary gentile religions that could be appropriated by the disciples of Jesus for their own uses at the most critical moment in their experience. Much less is it to be assumed that behind Peter's actual procedure lay any attempt at deceit. He was moved by the power of converging influences, which he himself had not analyzed and of which perhaps he was entirely unconscious. But the growing disposition to find religious meaning in mediators between the human and the divine, and particularly in apotheosized heroes, was an influence from which Peter could hardly have escaped, unless he had surrounded himself with the protective mantle of a scholar's research into the question of what in his environment was strictly Jewish and what had filtered into popular thinking from foreign sources. In that event he might still have pursued the new path by developing a defensive argument to show that he was merely bringing to light a true but previously neglected feature of genuine Judaism.

Moreover, when Peter laid hold upon the imagery of a divinized mortal who through his elevation to authority in heaven was in a position to deliver men from their distresses, he did not adopt wholesale the rest of the imagery characteristic of these gentile religions. On the contrary, he transformed his hero into a genuinely Jewish figure by inducting him into the office of apocalyptic Messiah. It was assumed that God had now decided to make the risen Jesus leader of those angelic forces that were to destroy the enemies of Israel and inaugurate the Kingdom of Heaven. Undoubtedly every item in this picture seemed to Peter and his friends quite properly Jewish. Nor did they show any disposition to adopt for the purposes of their own religious life the ceremonies connected with the worship of emperors or the rites of dying and rising divinities among the Gentiles. Later in time and outside of Palestine their successors found it possible and desirable to make larger use of ritualistic performances derived from their gentile neighbors, but there is no reason to imagine that the Christian group in Jerusalem, apart from its belief in the death and revival of the hero, attempted to establish a movement having any of the marks characteristic of a mystery cult.

Not so. ?
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R.

The spark that ignited the tinder of a new faith for Peter was the need felt within himself, during the crucial days following the crucifixion, for his former leader's reinstatement in divine favor. The notion of Jesus' apotheosis, so readily suggested by popular gentile religions in Peter's environment, brought to him too valuable a relief from his perplexity and too vivid an assurance of future help to leave any room for questioning the propriety of his procedure. Peter did not actually say that a deceased man had become a god. No Jew, however

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unschooled, could have assented to any such affirmation. It remained for his Greek successors in the new religion to recognize in Jesus a full-fledged Christian deity. Peter's accomplishment consisted in elevating the deceased Jesus to a position of supremely high favor in heaven beside the God of the Jews. Strictly speaking, this risen Jesus was not an absolute deity; he was only a messianized hero. Yet his elevation to this new position of dignity in the divine sphere, even though as yet it involved no metaphysical speculation regarding the personality of the glorified Messiah, was, from the functional point of view, as truly a deification as was the similar elevation of any god in a mystery cult or of any apotheosized Roman emperor. The future service which Jesus was to render his followers belonged conspicuously in the supernatural realm and involved a display of power hardly to be distinguished from that which God himself exercised. Henceforth the risen hero of Peter's faith was a new divine force in the cosmos.

This result is not so surprising as it might at first sight appear to be. It was amazingly easy for the ancients to bridge the gulf between deities and men. Among Gentiles, gods and superhuman beings of an inferior order frequented the abodes of mortals with the utmost propriety, while eminent men were generously divinized. By the beginning of the Christian Era in the Mediterranean world at large it was a prevalent custom to call prominent individuals gods during their lifetime and to accord them the full honors of deity after their decease.

Even Jews recognized a rich multiplicity of superhuman powers. Jehovah was attended by a host of angels ever ready to visit earth on commissions from heaven. Also a few deceased men of great repute—Moses, Enoch, Elijah—had been spared the usual residence in Sheol and miraculously translated to heaven where they dwelt with God and the angels. While no religiously well-behaved Jew would have felt at liberty to address a formal synagogue prayer or sing a psalm to Elijah, certainly it was assumed that the exalted prophet continued to be interested in the welfare of mortals who, when passing through crises like those experienced by the divinized hero, might fittingly expect him to render them assistance. He was now in a position similar to that of Gabriel or Michael or Raphael or other angelic personages capable of serving as intermediaries between heaven and earth. It was entirely appropriate to a Jewish setting that Jesus when in agony on the cross should have been supposed to call on the triumphant Elijah for help (Mark 15:35).

Similarly, in the case of the disciples, their visions of Jesus risen, and their consequent belief in his elevation to a position of lordship in heaven, made it quite proper to think of him henceforth as a truly supernatural being. When they found themselves persecuted for proclaiming his messiahship, they renewed their courage by addressing him in prayer and by using his powerful name to heal the sick. In this procedure they had no thought whatever of substituting their new Lord and Messiah for the Jehovah whom their fathers had served, or of elevating Jesus to a position of rivalry and equality with this supreme God. What they had discovered was a new angelic helper, another ministering spirit, on whom they could now rely with more confidence than on Gabriel or Elijah.

No Jewish Christian in Palestine would have been seriously tempted—probably none could have been persuaded—to call Jesus by any name that would identify him with the supreme Deity. Even in his new glorified status at the right hand of God in heaven, the Messiah's authority was parallel only to that of a powerful angel active in the same sphere with God Almighty but in no full sense his rival or his equal. Although superior in power to all other intermediaries, he was not to be dignified with the name or the honors of Jehovah. The Christian Paul was true to his Jewish upbringing when he declared that for the new religionists there was only one God the Father, just as there was only one Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor. 8:5 ff.). Although Paul was affected by many influences pressing upon him within the gentile environment where he labored long and devotedly, and claimed for the risen Jesus a genuinely divine authority, he consistently refrained from calling his hero God. Christ and God were never synonymous terms for this apostle, even though the operations of these two divine persons were quite inextricably blended in the experience of the believer.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE LORD OF THE CULT

The risen Jesus, although he now occupied a position of great prestige in the heavens, apparently rendered only very slight immediate service to the Christian group assembled in Jerusalem. Likely enough they thought him especially powerful in the world of demons and felt privileged to use his name in exorcisms. Perhaps also they believed him to be in some way responsible for those moments of unusual emotion when they felt themselves especially filled with the Holy Spirit. Yet he was not essential to this experience. Their Scriptures had promised that God himself would effect these marvelous displays in the last times, which they now believed to be at hand. Moreover, these operations of the Spirit were occasional, and quite incidental to the greater privileges just ahead to be realized with the inauguration of the Kingdom through the return of the risen Jesus. At present, as the Lord enthroned in heaven, Jesus had largely suspended beneficent contacts with his followers. It was not his purpose to establish them in a permanent community of worshipers who would enjoy his favors through long years to come. He would at an early date introduce a completely new order of things and bestow upon his disciples the blessings of the impending messianic age (Acts 3:20 f.).

Had the primitive Christians been Gentiles they might easily have placed a higher estimate on the worth of their risen hero for the continuing earthly activities of the disciples. If they had not thought the end of the world so near, and had been less restrained by their inherited sense of loyalty to the God of their fathers, they might have felt a much greater need for closer relations with their exalted Lord and a more abundant display of his interest in their affairs. Or, again, if memory of association with the earthly Jesus had been a less adequate source of practical religious values, they might have attempted to visualize in more realistic fashion present blessings to be derived from the risen Jesus. But in their situation they found little or no incentive for converting the glorified Messiah of the coming Kingdom into the present Lord of a worshiping community. It was sufficient for their immediate needs to recall memories of the earthly Jesus, to buttress their faith with citations from ancient Scripture, and to look forward with glowing hopes to the privileges of the new age.

As time passed without the return of Jesus, and the Christian movement spread to gentile territory, the exalted Christ assumed new responsibilities. He did not at once, nor in fact for a long time to come, abandon completely his original function as founder of a future Kingdom of Heaven to supplant the régime of Rome. He long remained the great and glorious Coming One. But in the meantime his services were appropriated more generously by his disciples in their present life. Communities of the faithful assembled at various places around the eastern end of the Mediterranean where their activities continued from year to year without catastrophic intervention from heaven. The membership of the groups now ceased to be exclusively Jewish and became dominantly gentile. Such Jews as were found in the congregations adapted themselves more or less readily to gentile ways in religion, and it was incumbent upon the apotheosized hero of the Christian cult to render a larger service in the present and guarantee new satisfactions of a type more immediately related to the daily needs of his new followers.

The fortunate fact that Paul's letters have been preserved makes it possible today to cite him in proof of this changing appreciation of the significance of the risen Jesus among Gentiles. Yet Paul was emphatic in affirming that he revered the same Lord as did the group in Jerusalem. Even though his gospel had been revealed to him directly from heaven, it was identical with that which Peter had been empowered to preach. The disposition among some modern scholars to make Paul the exponent of a message radically different from that of the Jerusalem Christians, and to insert between him and them an intermediate gentile church, whatever may be its justification in historical probability, is certainly not in accord with the mind of Paul. For him there was only one Christianity, if truly expounded, whether it was heralded by Peter or by himself. When Paul defined the quintessence of the Christian hope, he did so by means of two statements that were also fundamental with his Palestinian predecessors: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

To believe, on the strength of the appearances, that the crucified Jesus had been liberated from Sheol and elevated to messianic dignity in heaven was for Paul, as for Peter, the primary requirement for membership in the new religious society. If we may infer, on the basis of what seems to be a regular psychological law, that the convert to a new cause of which he had previously been a bitter opponent champions most vigorously the feature which had formerly been most hated, we may assume that Paul's principal objection to the preaching of men like Stephen had been what then seemed to the persecutor an entirely unwarranted claim made for the crucified Jesus. But Paul's conversion experience had sufficed to effect a complete change of mind. Jesus now, so the new convert believed, occupied a position of lordship in heaven, whence he would presently return to earth to set up the Kingdom of God. Throughout his Christian career Paul never lost sight of this characteristically Jewish Christian hope.

The strictly Jewish type of Paul's thinking regarding the functions of the risen Christ may easily be missed by one accustomed to regard this apostle as the founder of a continuing gentile Christianity. Significant as his work has been for the establishment of a gentile church to endure through many centuries, this result was certainly not within the purpose of Paul himself. For him the evangelization of Gentiles was only a temporary activity to be brought to a conclusion as hastily as possible, in order that the great consummation to be effected by the return of Jesus and the establishment of the eschatological Kingdom might soon be realized. The time was short and the Lord was at hand. In the meantime Paul and his fellow-laborers were offering the Gentiles a brief opportunity to avail themselves of future blessings to which the Jews were the real heirs. Paul was firmly of the opinion that the temporary hesitation of Israel in receiving the gospel was a state of affairs soon to be reversed. In the new scheme of things God had not cast off his chosen people, nor had the religious treasures intrusted to them in the past been handed over to new gentile guardians. The Jewish Christians were to be the main trunk of the gospel tree, while Gentiles were only engrafted branches. For Paul the exalted Lord of Christian faith was still the peculiar possession of the Jewish race (Romans, chaps. 10 f.).

Likewise Paul visualized the final demonstration of the heavenly Lord's authority in distinctly Jewish imagery. The risen Messiah was to come in apocalyptic splendor and establish the theocratic kingdom for Israel. Both the scene of the great consummation and the details of its realization were strictly Jewish in character. Paul never imagined that Christianity, even the Christianity preached by him, was to endure throughout many centuries as a successful rival to and an ultimate victor over all the heathen religions of the Roman Empire. The Messiah would come long before any such course of events had been historically realized. Although a Christian triumph, it was to be distinctly a Jewish redemption with a few Gentiles included in the membership of the new Kingdom of Heaven. These rescued foreigners would be transported to Palestine, even to Jerusalem itself, there to participate in the final salvation, when the Messiah would appear to "deliver up the Kingdom to God, even to the Father, when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power." Then would the victorious Messiah himself cease to exercise even that authority which he had possessed as exalted Lord. He was destined at last to abdicate in favor of the great God of the Hebrew race: "Then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:24–28). Paul had no intention of making a new Christian god out of his Lord Jesus [illegible] Christ. The service of the latter was a purely temporary one, although it was to be rendered in a sphere of authority that belonged emphatically in the realm of the divine. In this Paul was at one with the Jerusalem Christians.

But Paul, or his predecessors on the gentile missionary field, also discovered a new function for the glorified hero. There was a more immediate type of service to be rendered by the risen Jesus. Even at the present moment the help of this heavenly Lord was available in the personal experience of believers. This privilege was realized through attachment to the worshiping group, whose members were the peculiar possession of their Lord. Entrance into the community was attended by a form of experience as real for the spiritual life as that of birth for an individual's entrance upon the natural life. As Paul expressed it, the Christian, who by the exercise of faith and the rite of baptism had joined the new movement, was a "new creation in Christ Jesus." Just as devotees in certain popular gentile cults realized a union with their Lord when they experienced the initiation ceremonies and became full-fledged members of the society, so Paul held out to Gentiles the promise of a similar experience of union with the risen Jesus.[1] As Lord of the present Christian community he was concerned directly with the daily religious living of his regenerated adherents.

Paul's sense of present contact with the heavenly Lord is no occasional feeling attainable only in rare moments, but is a permanent possession of the Christian life. Christ, who is the Spirit, is continually present in the new community, and in its every member. Although Paul persists in designating the exalted hero by the Greek translation of the Hebrew term "Messiah" (Christ), he does not mean that his gentile converts shall visualize the Christian Savior simply as the deliverer of the Jewish people. He is still the Messiah of the Jews, and in fact their only hope for the future, but as a source of present help for Gentiles messiahship and lordship are equivalent images. Paul does not attempt to use language with philological exactness, but to describe an experience hard to state in explicit terms. Sometimes he says that the believer is in Christ, or that Christ is in the believer. At other times a similar relation of unity between the Christian and his Lord is affirmed. Or again, the medium of the divine infusion is the indwelling Spirit, and every convert necessarily becomes a "spiritual" person. No matter what the expression, the meaning is clear; the exalted Lord is in a very realistic sense the present possession of everyone who belongs to the Christian group. Not only is he the Messiah in heaven, but he is also the divine helper now resident by the power of the Spirit in every believer who has become attached to Christ by faith and inducted into the new society by the ordinance of baptism.

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[1] For this phase of gentile religious experience see especially H. R. Willoughby, *Pagan Regeneration: A Study of Mystery Initiations in the Graeco-Roman World* (Chicago, 1929).

When the rise of factions threatened the unity of the church at Corinth, Paul's most trenchant argument, advanced to prove the absurdity of schism, was a reference to this fundamental item in the Christian experience. Any other loyalty except that owed to Christ, with whom one had consummated a union in the rite of baptism, was without justification. Had any of the Corinthians been baptized into the name of Paul, or even had Paul himself performed the rite upon them, they might have mistakenly assumed a bond of union between him and them that would warrant their claim to be "of Paul." Similarly, baptism into the name of Peter would have made them Peter's and Peter theirs. But since they had all been baptized into the name of Christ, they were possessed by him, and by him alone. As habitations of the Lord and his property, Christians must so order their conduct that their physical bodies would be fitting abodes for the Spirit. Christ in them was their hope of glory. And, so far as the functional significance of the experience was concerned, it meant essentially that God himself was in the believer. The body of the Christian was a temple of God because the Spirit of God dwelt in him (I Cor. 1:10 ff.; 3:16–17).

Again, in the observance of the Lord's Supper union with Christ was further realized and perpetuated. Paul never forgot that this was a memorial feast, derived by him from his predecessors who celebrated it with a forward look in anticipation of Jesus' early return. The ceremony was designed to keep vividly before the disciples the memory of his martyr death until he should come to receive them as honored guests at the great messianic banquet in the new Kingdom of Heaven (I Cor. 11:26). But in the Corinthian community it had taken on an additional meaning significant of the more immediate relation of the exalted Lord to the present assembly of his worshipers. The Corinthians had been accustomed to sit at the table of other divinities whom Paul called "demons." They had known what it meant to have communion with the "table of demons" and to partake of the "cup of demons." Through this religious eating they believed they had absorbed divine power into their being. Some of them were disposed to continue the practice, thus fortifying life not only by union with Christ, realized in the Christian rite, but also by maintaining union with other supernatural powers, even though these might be inferior to the Lord Jesus Christ. But Paul, with characteristic Jewish psychology, insisted that the Christians' Lord, like the Jews' God, would tolerate no rivals, and that the Christians must henceforth content themselves with one religious meal and with the divine increment of an indwelling Christ made possible in this rite (I Cor. 10:14–22).

Why not necess. [illegible] this be [illegible] simply a true [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]?

Gentiles were much more interested in a cult hero active at the moment in re-creating the emotional life of the believer than they were in a Messiah empowered to effect a future redemption according to the apocalyptic program of Jewish Christianity. While the Gentiles were not hostile to the notion of a reconstitution of the world and the establishment of a new order,[1] naturally they cherished more fondly assurances of their own personal immortality and the present experience of mystical union with the divinity. Whether the churches founded by Paul accepted Jewish apocalyptic imagery as fully as it is portrayed in his letters is an open question. While Christian apocalypticism found some ardent supporters in the gen-

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[1] For "Gentile Hopes" see S. J. Case, *The Millennial Hope* (Chicago, 1918), pp. 1–47.

tile world for centuries after Paul's day, the Jesus whom the gentile Christians loved most was that heavenly Lord who was present by the Spirit's power in their gatherings, who filled them with a sense of divine possession when they joined the society, and who entered their emotional lives with renewing power as they participated in the rites of the religious community.

Paul had made a happy decision, so far as the success of his missionary preaching among Greeks was concerned, when at Corinth he determined that his main theme would be "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (I Cor. 2:2). Apparently he had begun his missionary labors in Europe by phrasing his Christian message in a more distinctly Jewish form. In Thessalonica he had persuaded a number of persons to turn "unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come" (I Thess. 1:9 f.). The initial part of this statement is a characteristically Jewish appeal such as Paul might have made had he been a Jewish rabbi addressing a gentile audience with a view to their conversion from idolatry to the worship of the true God. And the second part of the sentence represents a typically Palestinian Christian interest in a risen Jesus elevated to the dignity of Messiah in heaven and presently to return in judgment. There

But [illegible]
Act xvii

is in this language no intimation of the risen Lord's power to mediate divine assistance to his devotees at the present moment.

When Paul arrvied in Athens, apparently he continued the same type of appeal. While Acts, chapter 17, is no stenographic report of his address, there is every reason to suppose that he had spoken about the desirability of worshiping the one true God, and the need of preparing for resurrection and judgment. But the response to his message had been disappointing, and on reaching Corinth he was hesitant about undertaking again to present Christianity to a Greek audience. Quite apart from the representation in Acts 18:5–11, he says as much himself in his letter to the Corinthians. He had begun preaching to them in much fear and trembling, not by criticizing idolatry and warning them of judgment, but by declaring the true mystery of God hidden in the divine purposes from before the foundation of the world. This mystery consisted in God's plan to send into the world a redeemer who should die on the cross, crucified by the demonic forces of wickedness whom he had come to destroy. Unwittingly these evil powers played into his hands, and although he was now the Lord of Glory elevated to a position of supremacy in heaven, he was also present as the wisdom and power of God in the soul of the believer. One who had died with Christ in baptism was even now united with him in the Spirit and possessed of the very mind of Christ (I Corinthians, chap. 2).

It is not likely that Paul was trying an entirely new experiment upon the Greeks in Corinth. He had already learned in his own experience that the exalted Lord of the Christian faith was a source of divine help in daily living, and that through his triumph over death and exaltation to heaven he had wrought a mighty deliverance from demons, a deliverance that mortals themselves now living on the earth were privileged to experience. In his earlier preaching to the Galatians he had "placarded Jesus crucified," and the belief of his hearers had been rewarded by an infilling of the Holy Spirit attended by a display of miraculous powers among the members of the church (Gal. 3:1–5). We are not to imagine that the Corinthians constituted the first Christian congregation in which, through the mediation of the risen Jesus, persons who had now become members of the body of Christ had been endowed with power to prophesy, to work miracles, to exercise gifts of healing, and to speak with tongues (I Cor. 12:29). Even in Thessalonica, where Paul stressed monotheism and final judgment as the outstanding themes of missionary propaganda, evidences of the operations of the Holy Spirit were not lacking. The gospel had come to the Thessalonians not only in persuasive words but also "in power and in the Holy Spirit" (I Thess. 1:1–5).

Paul never forgot how to use monotheistic dogma and apocalyptic imagery, which had been valuable weapons for attack upon a gentile audience when composed of persons who through contact with the synagogues of the Dispersion had been made familiar with Jewish ways of thinking. But Paul had also learned early in his career to appreciate and employ the imagery of those gentile religions in which a dying and rising divinity was central in the cult. Similarly, the Lord Jesus Christ, having triumphed through his death over the demonic enemies of mankind, was now exalted to a position of authority in heaven, whence he descended in the Spirit's power to fill the believer with divine energy and thus to strengthen him in his conflict with the unfriendly forces in his environment.

The union between the worshiper and his redeeming Lord was not merely an individual affair. It was institutionally regulated and guaranteed. The devotee was a member of the new Christian society, the distinctive characteristic of which was union with the divinity and the privilege of calling upon him as Lord. Christians were those who "called upon the name of the Lord in every place" (I Cor. 1:2). Nor did they call in vain. The crucified Jesus, as a reward for his life of humility upon earth, had been raised to heaven by God and given the name which is above every name, "that in the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth" (Phil. 2:10). This heavenly Lord was supreme over all angels, over all demonic powers that threaten men in their present life, and over all the forces of evil that now rule in the lower world. One who had been inducted into his cult was safe both in the present and in the future. Yet even as a Christian, Paul was still too good a Jew, and remembered too well his training as a Hebrew of the Hebrews, to allow any statement about the supreme lordship of Jesus to stand unconditionally. When Paul declared that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, he did not fail to add "to the glory of God the Father." And we strongly suspect that in the meetings of the Christian congregation he encouraged all converts to hold in mind the picture of the Hebrew god as the supreme Deity. God had withdrawn into the background only temporarily in favor of the exalted Lord Jesus, who, on the consummation of the judgment, would immediately surrender everything to God (I Cor. 15:24). But this Jewish-Christian refinement of theological thinking would be of little concern to the average Gentile.

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[illegible] the Father."

The multitude of dying and reviving divinities whose cults had spread widely about the Mediterranean were not, it is true, the supreme gods of the universe. They were, one might say, deities of the second order. They had shared in the common experiences of mortals, even submitting to death, and had passed by way of the grave to heaven. Just because they had participated so fully in the life of mankind, they were capable of instituting rites of religion that could serve the deepest needs of mortals. The help rendered a devotee by Lady Isis, Lord Osiris, or any of the host of similar divinities popular in the world where early Christianity arose was of no mean order. Some cults were especially noted for one type of satisfaction while others served a different purpose, but their common function was to minister to the needs of mortals under present unfavorable conditions and to insure a blessed immortality. The ceremonies of initiation were often of an orgiastic character which yielded a correspondingly high emotional satisfaction to the initiate. Frequently he represented his experience as a new birth, an infilling of the deity, a marriage with the divine, even a deification of the devotee. His present physical welfare was a care of many of these gods who were thought to protect him from all sorts of possible disasters and to heal the diseases that might afflict his body. He frequently raised his voice in praise of these divinities, when in trouble he called upon them out of the depths, he felt their redeeming power in the crises of his life, they fortified his courage by experiences of emotion and ecstasy, and as they had triumphed over death, so ultimately they would insure for him a happy life beyond the grave.[1]

Among the common people of the ancient world this type of religion was by far the most vigorous rival encountered by Christianity. Even within the narrow confines of Palestine certain of those hero-saviors had long been rendering a conspicuous service to foreigners settled in the Holy Land.[2] But Jews, and even Jewish Christians, were already so amply provided with established forms of worship that these foreign divinities could serve no important function beyond the possible suggestion of a new heroic imagery not already present in Judaism. Jewish religious ceremonies were too firmly fixed, and too distinctive in their character, to permit of any substantial alteration, either consciously or unconsciously, in the direction of the mystery type of religious institution. On the other hand, when the Christian movement spread beyond Palestine and broke with the Jewish synagogues of the Dispersion, it lacked any well-defined organization of its own. Yet, while its membership had remained dominantly Jewish, the rites of the new cult had followed largely the model of the synagogue service. Even Paul, although he found keen personal satisfaction in a sense of mystical union with the risen Christ, still regarded the reading of Scripture, the recitation of Jewish prayers, and the singing of psalms as quite sufficient for his personal needs in worship. With gentile converts, however, the situation was different. They might listen attentively to recitations from the prophets, or join in the singing of a psalm, or repeat a Jewish prayer rebaptized with Christian phrases, but they were accustomed to place greater ritualistic emphasis on their apotheosized heroes as founders and guardians of their institution. The ceremonies of the cult centered about its Lord, its rites united the devotee to him, and the use of his name gave magical significance to its liturgy.

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[1] For further details see S. J. Case, *Experience with the Supernatural in Early Christian Times* (New York, 1929), pp. 221–99.

[2] See above, pp. 73 ff.

As early as the time of Paul, in fact, the exalted Lord of the Christians had acquired a well-recognized place in the liturgy of the gentile churches. His name was proclaimed in the rite of baptism, which was performed, as Paul says, "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:11). He was so conspicuously the divinity to whom believers addressed their petitions that they could fittingly be designated in almost technical language as "those who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus." Even Paul prayed to him for the removal of a "thorn in the flesh," which apparently was some form of physical affliction. Normally it was the function of the Christian's Lord to cure disease, just as truly as a similar service was rendered by Lord Serapis. If the privilege were denied to Paul it was not because Christ lacked healing power, but because the divine efficiency might be the better demonstrated in sustaining the apostle despite his infirmity (II Cor. 12:8 f.). Even when the Corinthian Christians met together to discipline one of their unruly brothers, they acted "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ," and in his authority they excommunicated the disobedient member of the society (I Cor. 5:4 f.). Liturgical formulas expressing assurances of divine grace through the name of the Lord Jesus abound in Paul's letters. This sacred name was constantly on the lips of worshipers.

Thus the glorified Messiah of early Christian expectation, when transferred from Palestine to the Roman Empire at large, was significantly transformed in consequence of the necessity laid upon him to supplant, in the affections and needs of new converts, those divine heroes who formerly were objects of affection and worship among the Gentiles. The Lord and Savior Jesus Christ had to render a similar service but he had to render it better. If his rivals, through their triumph over death, inspired a hope of immortality in their dev-

Why then are [illegible] cults in N.T. nomenclature a [illegible]! Why "idols"

otees, it was his duty to offer more substantial evidences of ability to transcend the grave and insure for his followers a future blessedness. If the ceremonies of other cults yielded an emotional satisfaction by giving to the worshiper a feeling of union with the deity, it was necessary for the Christian ceremonies to furnish a like stimulus to the realization of the divine presence. Since the other saviors healed diseases, the protecting divinity of the Christian had to display a more effective therapeutic activity. He had also to satisfy his followers' yearning for a sacred name with which to conjure as they moved about in their demon-infested world. Even before Paul's death the new Christian movement had made long strides toward success in presenting to Gentiles a Lord Jesus Christ who could successfully vie with all competitors.

Perhaps it is needless to remark that the process by which the risen Messiah of Jewish imagery became an object of ardent worship among Gentiles was a gradual and probably a wholly unpremeditated accomplishment. When the membership of the new movement became dominantly gentile the transformation went on more rapidly and more eagerly. But always it was a normal evolutionary development in attitudes and interests, as the hero of the new Christian faith was called upon to serve in areas of religious life that had previously been the care of the corresponding type of gentile divinity. No Christian had any thought of deliberately re-creating the figure of the Messiah to make him ape or counterfeit Lord Serapis or Lord Osiris or Lord Dionysus. And when hostile critics reminded a worshiper of Christ that Gentiles already had heroes who were the essential counterparts of this Christian Lord, and that these divinities were the authors of rites and beliefs similar to those current in Christianity, the Christian did not deny the assertions of his enemies. He himself was quite ready to admit the similarity, or even the chronological priority, of the rival cult. But without the slightest hesitation he maintained that although Christianity rendered a similar service, it rendered it infinitely better. Accordingly, whenever a faithful Christian discovered any new religious demand in his gentile environment, he was sure that his cult hero was capable of meeting the need more authoritatively and effectively than it had ever been met before. Earlier gentile cults of a similar character were really the counterfeits. They only symbolized inadequately what God had foreordained to be the genuine religion preached by disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

than ?

The more popularity Christianity gained in the gentile world at large, the more firmly did the exalted Lord establish himself in the affections and reverence of his worshipers. Gradually he lost his older Jewish features and became distinctively gentile in form. The glorified Messiah portrayed by Palestinians had promised a salvation mainly for the future and one phrased in strongly political terms. In a Jewish atmosphere where Roman imperialism was felt to be the unendurable scourge of society there was a very genuine service to be rendered by a divine helper appearing in the near future at the head of an angelic army to overthrow all secular kingdoms and establish the rule of God. That this yearning for deliverance from Rome should have been largely determinative for the interests and attitudes of the primitive Christian community in Jerusalem occasions no surprise. It continued to be dominant in the religious quest of large numbers of Jews in Palestine for more than a century after the death of Herod the Great. Here the belief in a Messiah to come in apocalyptic triumph answered to one of the deepest needs of the human heart.

Among gentile Christians the characteristic Jewish animosity toward Lord Caesar did not at first prevail. Outside of Jewish circles, worship of rulers was not at all an uncongenial thought to people in the eastern portion of the ancient world. Many persons felt great satisfaction with the existing form of government. The establishment of the Roman Empire by Augustus had insured for the Oriental lands a peace and prosperity such as had not been enjoyed for many a day, and the popular

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and [illegible]?

thinking of the time readily consented to belief in the divinity of the ruler. Since the blessings of good government seemed to imply an unusual measure of divine favor for mankind, to worship the emperor as heaven's representative appeared to be a reasonable way of recognizing one's appreciation of a stable régime. While the help received from the Caesars pertained only to a present material prosperity, it was not on that account wholly devoid of religious significance for the people of that age.

An appeal to the gentile world by Christian missionaries to see in their Lord Jesus the implacable enemy of Lord Caesar would not have elicited a hearty response in Paul's day. Ineradicable hostility toward the worship of a ruler, which characterized the Jew, was not true of the Gentile. He found much present satisfaction in believing that Caesar was the lord of this world, not only because he was the Roman emperor, but also because the imperial régime was a great blessing to humanity. Discontent with the present form of government was not for Gentiles, as it was for Jews in Palestine, a crucial religious problem. Christian missionaries might admonish their hearers to wait for the coming of the Lord from heaven, and converts were not unwilling to insure for themselves safety in the event that the present world should suddenly collapse. They too were familiar with a doctrine of the world's dissolution that slightly resembled the Jewish notion of a catastrophe to precede the establishment of the apocalyptic Kingdom of Heaven.[1] The favor of the Christian Lord Jesus would certainly be welcome to a Gentile on that fateful day. But it cannot be said truthfully that he was yearning for that consummation as a means of release from bondage to a present Lord Caesar.

At a later time, when Christians were persecuted by the state, and a confession of Caesar's lordship was made the condition of immunity, Christian psychology reverted to the earlier Jewish attitude of hostility to emperor worship, but this state of feeling had not been at the outset a distinctive feature of gentile Christianity. Only within circles where Jewish modes of thought were still uppermost, as in the Book of Revelation, was the bitter enmity between the Roman Caesars and the exalted Lord of Christendom vividly portrayed. Worship of emperors was, of course, impossible even for the most liberal-minded gentile Christian. Yet it was not essential to genuine Christian piety to perpetuate the older notion that any form of secular government was a demonic institution; the kingdom of this world did not necessarily belong to Satan. Since God permitted governments to exist, evidently their normal operations were in accord with his will, and it was the duty of the Christian to

What were [illegible]! Acts?

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[1] See above, p. 95, n. 1.

obey the rulers. In fact, he not only obeyed them, but he prayed to his Lord Jesus Christ on their behalf, and whenever the opportunity offered he zealously declared that Christians were the most valuable element in the population of the Empire. Loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ was not at all inconsistent with loyalty to Caesar, if only a Christian were excused from rendering worship either to Caesar or to the gods of the Roman state.

While the exalted Lord of the gentile church was not a belligerent contender with Caesar for supremacy in Roman politics, he was a formidable opponent of other divine beings popular in the religious cults of the period. This rivalry, apparent even in Paul's day, became increasingly conspicuous in later years. The Gentile had long been accustomed to populate his world with hordes of demonic powers, friendly or hostile according to circumstances. Quite accidentally one might incur their displeasure. It was not uncommon to ascribe the minor inconveniences of life, as well as its more serious afflictions, to the vindictive actions of the offended demons. Life in a world infested with supernatural enemies could be made safe only by attachment to a patron deity. One sought safety by alliance with a more powerful divinity whose favor was to be secured by membership in his cult. The devotee was henceforth protected by his Lord.

When missionaries first proffered Gentiles the help of the Lord Jesus, they found the territory already well filled with religions designed to meet this type of need. But by the early part of the second century Christians had gone a long way toward successfully presenting their Lord as a more dependable helper than any other divinity functioning in this area of peoples' quests. He offered his devotees not only the assistance that was obtainable in other cults, but new values that had been brought over from the Jewish antecedents of Christianity, and from memories of the earthly Jesus. Needy individuals found in the Christian society a great wealth of satisfactions associated with the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. As he had been the friend of mankind, giving himself even unto death for their good, so the church was a haven of friendliness where the hungry found food, the homeless were given shelter, and the outcasts were respectably reinstated among their fellow-men. Diseases were healed by the powerful name of Christ. The moral life received a new increment, as converts learned new lessons from Moses and from Jesus, and experienced the exalted emotions of rebirth through participation in the church's sacraments. Believers were safe in a demonized world, because of their right to the name of Jesus, before whom all demons quailed. In larger and larger numbers Gentiles found the protection offered by the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to be more comprehensive, more complete, and more satisfactory than that promised by any other popular divinity of the day.

In this rise of the Christian Lord to a position of supremacy over rivals one ought to note that his success was insured, not so much by formal arguments in defense of his supremacy, as by the efficacy of the activities connected with his name. We are not to imagine that the common man of the ancient world had been convinced in debate with some Christian theologian that the figure of the Lord Jesus was more logically worthy of recognition than that of Lady Isis or Lord Serapis. Acceptance had been brought about in a very different manner. One day when the Gentile was sick, or had lost a loved one, or had suffered a reverse in business, or had fallen a victim to a robber on the highway, he happened upon a Christian who offered him new supernatural assistance from a source about which he had never before heard. This help immediately began to operate in the service which the Christian and his friends rendered to their new acquaintance. The stranger was also accustomed to appeal to new gods. It was an attitude that had long been in vogue among people in the Roman Empire. He could easily be persuaded to seek divine aid from a new source, especially when he was in a condition to suspect that his former helpers had not been equal to his necessities.

But the notion that on allying himself with a new divine protector he must immediately renounce allegiance to all others was an entirely novel idea for the average Gentile. From his point of view the more friends one could have among the divine powers, the happier was one's lot. It was not mere perversity, but a genuinely religious feeling, that caused the Corinthians, who had adopted Christianity under the teaching of Paul, to maintain their former connections with the other cults in the city. Undoubtedly this sentiment long prevailed among gentile converts. Certainly at the outset Christianity was unable to enforce strictly its Jewish doctrine of allegiance to only one Lord. It required years of discipline and generations of training to change traditional gentile psychology. Indeed, one might say that resort to a wide range of supernatural powers and fondness for variety in religious ceremonies was an ineradicable urge among Gentiles. In the course of time they forsook all other religions in favor of Christianity, but only when the church had so elaborated its ritual and increased the scope of its hero's significance as to include within itself a variety of features originally peculiar to its competitors. By this expansive process its Lord ultimately supplanted all his rivals for the devotion of men in the Roman Empire.

It was as an object of worship and adoration that the Lord Jesus Christ won his triumph in the Roman world, first over the rival gods of other cults and ultimately over the ruler himself. When early in the fourth century the joint emperors, Constantine and Licinius, first admitted Christianity to the position of a recognized religion in the state, they made it plain that their purpose was to avail themselves of such divine assistance as the god of the Christians might represent. Two hundred years earlier, to Pliny when governor of Bithynia the small Christian groups meeting to sing hymns to Christ as a god seemed only an example of extravagant superstition. To Constantine, appreciating the solidarity and persistence of the well-organized Christian societies within his kingdom, the devotion of Christians to their Lord seemed far more significant. The Emperor, in all good conscience, was anxious to avail himself of Christianity's supernatural strength as a worshiping institution in the service of the state. He could afford henceforth to tolerate Christians' refusal to call Caesar "Lord," if the Christians would appeal to their own Lord on Caesar's behalf. And the Christians proved as ready to come to the assistance of an emperor as they had been willing to aid the most helpless outcast in the Roman world. They were convinced that their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was efficacious for the deliverance of the state itself from the troubles by which it was beset. Thus it was again as the Lord of the Christian society, and not as a figure in Christological speculation, that Jesus triumphed in the Roman state. Christians no longer needed to look for his return in apocalyptic splendor. The kingdom of this world had now become the Kingdom of their Lord. Already the Galilean had conquered.

CHAPTER SIX

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THE INCARNATE GOD

Deification of Jesus originally pertained to the heavenly Christ as exalted Lord; his earthly career was not at first seriously considered in this connection. The Jewish atmosphere in which Christianity arose did not invite a belief that the Galilean prophet had been an incarnate god, however much his surviving disciples might appreciate their memories of association with him.

On gentile soil the situation was quite different. Here new converts easily assumed that Jesus had been a divinity while in the flesh. Already Gentiles were thoroughly familiar with figures of this type. Sometimes their revered heroes were thought to have been half-God and half-man, like Hercules born of a divine father and a human mother. At other times they were taken to be incarnations of deity, "manifestations" as they were called, like some divine king who was supposed to be a god temporarily visible in human form. Again, the embodiments of divinity might be mere phantoms, like a Zeus who could change his shape at will by taking on the appearance of man or beast. But a sojourn on earth, even though it had occurred in very realistic human fashion, was not at all inconsistent with the genuine deity of a hero-savior honored in the rites of an established cult.

Among Gentiles the heavenly Christ was revered only the more zealously when his career on earth was represented as the activity of a veritable deity among men. Converts from heathenism were quite ready thus to believe. They gladly found in the story of Jesus' words and deeds indications of divine wisdom and power that had been largely unappreciated by his contemporaries. The authors of two Greek gospels happily employed the imagery of a supernatural birth, a feature of religious thinking widely current among Gentiles, to make it possible for the human and the divine to converge in Jesus. The fourth evangelist neglected altogether the tradition of a supernatural generation, and laid hold on the already familiar gentile imagery of the divine reason, the Logos, as the means of bringing deity to mankind.

While formal arguments were useful for propaganda, or for defense against critics, the faith of the rank and file rested on more immediate grounds. The exalted Lord, who protected his present worshipers from the power of demons, who filled them with a sense of the divine presence, who vitalized their emotions and healed their bodies, was now experientially incarnate in his votaries. They readily believed that he once dwelt in a fleshly body like theirs, only in one of greater perfection. And to imagine that he had been truly deity while himself in the flesh helped to confirm their assurance that he was now able through the ceremonies of his cult to deify those who became united with him in the sacraments. To have denied them this faith would have been to take away one of the principal values of their religion, while to assume that the earthly Jesus had been a deity further strengthened their confidence in his present ability to divinize mortals and insure for them a blessed continuance of life beyond the grave.

By the beginning of the second century gentile Christendom had made of Jesus both a present God in the heavens and a manifestation of deity while on earth. But this simple faith of his ardent worshipers was soon to be disturbed by the violent pains of controversy. Troubles came both from within and from without. Toward the close of the first century the new religion had already shown unmistakable signs of emerging from the shelter of its earlier obscurity among the multitude of cults then flourishing in the Roman Empire. It rapidly gathered momentum during the next two centuries, and in the fourth century became the legal religion of the Roman state. During these years of the movement's expansion Christians found themselves confronted with many new problems, not the least of which was the need for a more exact definition of their faith in the new God.

How exact? Pauls letters?

Several causes contributed to complicate the issue. In the first place, the early second century witnessed a considerable increase in the membership of the Christian society. This growth in personnel introduced a greater variety of interests within single communities and resulted in the rise of divergent opinions that menaced the former unity and placidity of the congregations. The independence of the individual threatened the integrity of the movement and necessitated the establishment of a more elaborate organization. Regularity in ritual, guidance by recognized officials, and explicitly defined norms of belief now became matters of much concern. These new controls were felt to be essential to the continuity and well-being of the growing religion. But the survival of its primitive spontaneity and the aggressive individualism of its more recent converts were influences too powerful to be immediately suppressed in the interests of a uniform tradition and in conformity with a rule of faith sponsored by ecclesiastical authorities. In the initial stages of its operation, standardization magnified divergencies, consolidated minorities, and produced the separatist movements called "heresies." It was quite natural that disagreement in opinions about the deity of Christ should have been the theme of the earliest controversies.

A second source of anxiety to Christians was the increase of hostility from their heathen environment. During the second and third centuries displays of this enmity grew both in frequency and in violence. The criticisms leveled by Christian preachers against other religions became more generally known, and the authorities, who held the great gods of the Roman world to be the supernatural guardians of the state, viewed with increasing alarm the success of the rival movement. Its adherents were accused of atheism and sacrilege because of their persistent refusal to worship the traditional deities.[1] In this atmosphere of suspicion and open criticism representatives of Christianity soon learned the importance of a more vigorous and systematic defense of their distinctive beliefs and practices. Above everything else, it behooved them to justify their well-known habit of venerating Jesus as a God. Their enemies not only declared it absurd to worship a crucified man, but alleged that Christian neglect of the great heathen deities had incited their displeasure. Consequently numerous calamities had overtaken mankind in recent times. To this charge there was only one competent reply. Christians must prove to their accusers that Jesus was not only a real divinity, but was superior in dominion and authority to all rivals and capable of becoming the most dependable supernatural protector of Roman society. Christian apologists, who addressed emperors in defense of the persecuted religion, wisely made much of arguments to demonstrate the deity of Christ. The point was a crucial one in that distressing situation.

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[1] See A. Harnack, "Der Vorwurf des Atheismus in den drei ersten Jahrhunderten," *Texte und Untersuchungen,* Neue Folge, XIII, Heft 4 (1905), 1–16.

A third very significant factor in the history of Christianity during this general period was its espousal by men representative of the higher culture of the day. These "philosophers," as they were commonly called, constituted a well-recognized class in ancient society. As the generally accepted intellectual leaders of the age, they thought it proper and necessary to attack every problem of life from what they believed to be the point of view of reason. They were experts in definition and disputation. When converted to Christianity they consecrated these same interests and methods to the service of the new cause, applying their intellectual acumen to the defense of the Christian tradition and the more elaborate definition of items in its dogma. While they were appreciative sharers in the worship of the church, and found great satisfaction in the Christian experience of salvation, they were especially competent to introduce definitions and distinctions into the relatively incoherent mass of emotions and convictions already richly expressive of the vital energy of the early Christian movement. Naturally the converted philosopher felt keenly the urge to formulate a dogma that would more accurately define the worshiping community's attitude of reverence for its Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

By the beginning of the second century some Christian thinkers, in their zeal for the divine Christ, had gone to the extreme of denying the genuineness of his humanity. On earth he had been, so they said, merely an apparition and not an actual human person. Or, if there had been a real human Jesus, the divine being had constituted a separate entity never connected in any essential manner with the earthly individual. One view maintained that Jesus, a natural son of Joseph and Mary, had received at the time of his baptism the spiritual being called Christ, who had descended from heaven in the form of a dove. This supernatural visitant departed again before the crucifixion, as was indicated by Jesus' cry on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There were many variations in details, but the motive fundamental to this type of Christology, commonly termed "Docetism," was perfectly clear. It aimed to guard the genuineness of Christ's deity, and hence his effectiveness as a redeemer, against degradation from a too realistic participation in the frailties and imperfections of humanity.

There may have been a measure of rhetorical exaggeration in Jerome's statement that the Docetic type of heresy already existed in the time of the apostles in Judea while the blood of Christ was still fresh,[1] but its comparatively early appearance is well attested. The menace of those who refused to confess that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh was known in the latter part of the New Testament period (I John 4:2; II John 7; cf. Heb. 2:14), and early in the second century Ignatius urged the Christians in Smyrna to make no mention either in private or in public of persons holding this deviating opinion (vii. 2).

It is significant that the displeasure of Ignatius was aroused by the ritual nonconformity of the offenders. They refused to participate in the rites of the Lord's Supper because they did not acknowledge "the Eucharist to be our Savior Jesus Christ's flesh which suffered for our sins and which the Father in his goodness raised. Thus disputing the gift of God they perish in their questionings. It were better for them to love it, in order that they also may rise from the dead." These persons apparently were sympathetic with the type of gentile thinking that made flesh inherently evil and therefore an unworthy habitation for godly purity. Nor had they any desire to experience a future incarceration in the prison-house of a restored body. This was very respectable gentile philosophical sentiment, even though it might be anathema to a Christian bishop whose institution carried over from Judaism an inflexible belief in the resurrection of the flesh.[1]

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[1] *Against the Luciferians* 23.

If Jesus had not possessed a genuine body the virtue of the Eucharist, now the central act in the ritual, would have been placed in jeopardy. It would no longer have been, to use the Ignatian phrase, the very "medicine of immortality," the remedy against death, insuring participation in life eternal with Christ (*Eph.* xx. 2). Also the rite of baptism would have lost its efficacy had not the pre-existent Jesus taken on real human flesh and submitted to baptism in order that "by his suffering he might cleanse water" (xviii. 2). There was good reason for the bishop's admonition to the Trallians warning them to stop their ears to anyone who denied that Jesus Christ was of the race of David and the son of Mary. He was "truly born and ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died in the sight of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth, who also was truly raised from the dead, his Father having raised him, who in like fashion will so raise us also who believe in him" (*Tral.* ix; *Smyr.* i f.).

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[1] The stubbornness of the opposition and the popular importance of belief in a resurrection are amply attested by the numerous treatises in its defense produced in the course of the second century by such leaders as Justin, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Irenaeus, Tertullian.

Ignatius, like the writer of the Fourth Gospel, believed that the salvation of the Christian, both in this world and in the world to come, was insured by partaking of the eucharistic emblems affirmed to be the flesh and blood of the incarnate divinity, Jesus (John 6:53–59). Even the Christian virtues of knowledge, faith, and love were thought by Ignatius to be inseparably associated with the sacred meal of the church. Faith is the "flesh of the Lord" and love is "the blood of Jesus Christ" (*Tral.* vi. 1). Or, again, the "bread of God" is the flesh of Christ and the draught of his blood is "love incorruptible" (*Rom.* vii. 3). The activity of Jesus on earth would have been robbed of all its value for Ignatius had not the Savior's flesh been bruised as really as Ignatius' flesh would feel the fangs of the wild beasts waiting to crunch his bones in the arena at Rome whither he was en route to be crowned with the glory of martyrdom (*Tral.* x; *Rom.* v). The church for which Ignatius speaks mediated a salvation for the whole man, both soul and body, here and hereafter. In its worship, its sacraments, and its teaching it held up to view a hero who participated as genuinely in human flesh as did those whom he redeemed. This literalistic thinking was quite incapable of "spiritualizing," in Docetic fashion, the earthly career of Jesus, while at the same time regarding him an adequate Savior. For this office he needed to be, as Ignatius vehemently repeats, both true God and complete man.

Ignatius was not successful in suppressing the novel opinions that had loomed menacingly on his horizon. The disposition to keep Christ free from a too close identification with human flesh, and the tendency to reject the Jewish notion of a bodily resurrection, continued to find vigorous supporters from among the gentile converts to Christianity. Those aggressive leaders who belong to the group commonly designated Gnostics rose to especial prominence during the first half of the second century. Frequently they were men of force in both intellect and character, and were responsible for the founding of what might be called new Christian denominations that in some cases survived for centuries side by side with the orthodox churches, whose leaders bitterly assailed the heretics.[1]

Gnostic theologians often emphasized the importance of Christ's work on earth, but they all tended to deny or minimize any supposably genuine humanity for his physical body.[1] Thus they were offensive to other Christian leaders who perpetuated in their ecclesiastical institution the attitude represented by Ignatius. The Gnostics were ready enough to believe that Christ had brought to mankind a new revelation from the Deity, and they looked to organized religion to save and enlighten the soul of man, but it did not seem to them so important that Christ should also be a fleshly embodiment of God capable of constituting a prototype of the redeemed individual in the Christian society and a guaranty of the resurrection of the believer's flesh on the Day of Judgment. From the Gnostic point of view, the service which the Christian institution rendered to the individual lay rather in the realm of the spirit. By his participation in the rites of the church the devotee experienced an enlightenment, attained a divine knowledge (*gnosis*), which had been made possible through the new fund of revelation brought from God by Christ and the acquisition of which insured the ultimate triumph of the soul when at death it should be released from its earthly prison-house to start on its perilous journey heavenward.

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[1] There is a good general article on "Gnosticism" by E. F. Scott in Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, and another by W. Bousset in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed.); see also S. J. Case, *Evolution of Early Christianity* (Chicago, 1914), pp. 326 f.; G. B. Smith (ed.), *Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion* (Chicago, 1916), pp. 305–15; E. de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme* (2d ed.; Paris, 1925), pp. 499–540; L. Fendt, *Gnostische Mysterien: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des christlichen Gottesdienst* (München, 1922); W. Foerster, *Von Valentin zu Herakleon* (Giessen, 1928).

Si non! [illegible]
Cur judic ?

Gnostic propaganda failed to win the majority, but throughout the second and the third centuries various defenders of the older Christian tradition felt the heresy to be so dangerous that a great deal of energy was expended in its condemnation. That Christ had been genuinely a human being was one of the main contentions now to be maintained by the orthodox. The issue was no mere academic question, but one that concerned every pious soul who trusted its well-being to the care of the church and rested its hope of salvation on the efficacy of ecclesiastical rites. With the lapse of time and the growth in membership the interest in a sacramentally valid religion constantly increased. The more widely Christianity spread among the common people, the more general was the tendency to measure religious worth in terms of sensible realities, and the more limited was the popularity of any interpretation which dealt pre-eminently or exclusively with intellectual concepts and purely spiritual entities. Flesh always seems more real than spirit to the ordinary man.

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[1] A terse account of their different statements of this common skepticism is given in Irenaeus *Heresies* iii. 11. 3.

The necessity of believing in the reality of Christ's humanity was frequently reiterated. Explaining to the Roman authorities the character of the much-suspected Christian Eucharist, Justin declared that it was not the eating of common bread and the drinking of an ordinary beverage, but was a partaking of the flesh and blood of the Savior. The uninitiated critic might easily have suspected Christians of cannibalism—a charge frequently made against them—even after listening to Justin's exposition. They ate, he said, the body of Christ who had been made flesh and blood to effect their salvation, and from this food the blood and the flesh of the worshipers were transformed into the immortal flesh and blood of the incarnate divinity. It followed as a matter of course that lack of genuineness in the fleshly body of Christ, or a form of existence for him different in kind from that of the disciple's, would quite vitiate the saving worth of the sacrament in the popular thinking of the communicants.[1]

Again, in his treatise on the resurrection,[2] Justin stressed the necessity of believing in the reality of the flesh as well as of the spirit of Jesus. Otherwise the Christian hope would be seriously impaired. The heretics commented that it was absurd to suppose that man's body would participate in redemption, and accordingly they maintained that "Jesus himself existed only in spiritual form, and not at all in the flesh, but clothed in a phantom body that had only the appearance of flesh. Thus they attempted to defraud the flesh of the promise of salvation." Although Justin offered numerous counter arguments drawn from natural sources, he insisted that God, who is himself "truth and perfect mind," had through the revelation in Christ supplied incontrovertible grounds for faith. The incarnate Logos, "wearing flesh, exhibiting both himself and the Father, in himself bestows on us the resurrection from the dead, and the subsequent eternal life." The bestowal of this inestimable gift on mortals was effected, of course, through the operation of the sacraments.

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[1] Justin *Apol.* i. 66.

[2] *Ibid.* i f.

The voice of Justin at Rome was silenced by his execution about the year A.D. 165, but others stood ready to champion orthodoxy in every quarter where Christianity existed. About twenty years later Irenaeus of Gaul became an emphatic spokesman for traditional beliefs. He too was a loyal churchman, averse to any formulation of dogma that endangered the literal efficacy of the sacred rites or threatened to deprive salvation of its realistic character by advocating dangerously spiritualizing or speculative interpretations. To effect redemption it was necessary to inoculate sinful and doomed humanity with the immortal antitoxin of deity. The Eucharist provided the specific means by which the food of immortality was made available for the individual, and to deny the complete identification of the Savior with the flesh of mankind would have invalidated the sacrament.

If human flesh does not attain to salvation, then, according to Irenaeus, Christ has not redeemed us with his blood, "nor is the cup of the Eucharist the communion of his blood, nor the bread which we break the communion of his body. For there is no blood except from veins and flesh and other bodily elements which constitute human substance, such as in truth was actually taken on by the Logos of God. By his own blood he redeemed us, as also the apostle himself says, 'in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the remission of sins.' " Since the elements in the Eucharist become the actual body of Christ, and thus man's flesh is increased and supported by absorbing this divine substance, how can the heretics say that one who is nourished from the body and blood of the Lord is to be denied the enjoyment of this new immortalized body in the future world? Had not Paul said that "we are members of Christ's body, of his flesh and of his bones"? Now the heretics who affirm that immortality is wholly an affair of the spiritual and invisible man forget that the spirit does not have bones and flesh. On the contrary, Paul had reference to the actual man, who consists of flesh and nerves and bones, a flesh which is nourished by the cup of Christ's blood and which grows by eating the bread of his body, made available for the believer in the eucharistic rite of the church.[1]

When the Christian experience of regeneration, attained through baptism and the Eucharist, was projected into the arena of theological debate, the result was Irenaeus' famous doctrine of "recapitulation." In order to be an effective savior Christ

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[1] Irenaeus *op. cit.* v. 2. 2 f.

All this was in Romans.

had to sum up in himself the fleshly reality of man, had indeed to be genuinely a second Adam. He could not have redeemed us by his blood had he not become fully human, restoring to his creation the likeness and image in which it had originally been made.[1] Foreshadowings of this doctrine were already evident in Justin's concern to trace Jesus' human ancestry back to the patriarchs. Although the son of God, he became man through the Virgin Mary, in order that sin, introduced by the serpent who beguiled the virgin Eve, might be abolished in the same manner in which it had originated.[2] But it remained for Irenaeus to use this argument with more telling effect against the heretics.[3]

But Paul taught all this long before Irenaeus.

When the Gnostics made Jesus and Christ distinct beings, denying to the latter full participation in human flesh, Irenaeus declared that they could not attain to salvation. They failed to understand its fundamental conditions. Its first necessity was a provision by which human nature could become one with God; "had not man been joined to God he could never have become a partaker of incorruptibility."[4] Death had come upon our human flesh through Adam's sin, and salvation could be accomplished only by the re-establishment of a new union between God and man in the person of Jesus. Accordingly Christ had embraced in his career on earth the entire experience of the human race from birth to death, and had "passed through every stage of life, restoring to the whole race communion with God." This new status never could have been attained unless Christ had lived in a body of human flesh, but a flesh that had remained free from the taint of Adam's sin. As pre-existent Son of God he had not borne the image of mortals; but with the incarnation "he was made man, recapitulated in himself the long evolution of mankind, presenting us with salvation in compendious form and granting us the privilege of receiving again the image and likeness of God which we had lost in Adam." It could be said, indeed, that "God recapitulated in himself the ancient creation of man, that he might put him to death, rob death of its power, and restore man to life."[1] Or, as expressed in another of Irenaeus' striking sentences, the Lord Jesus Christ "was made a man among men, that he might join the end to the beginning, that is, man to God."[2]

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[1] v. 2. 1.

[2] *Dial.* c. 4 f.

[3] E.g., iii. 18–22; v. 19.

[4] iii. 19. 1.

Jesus had not existed in the shape of man prior to his appearance on earth, nor had he been incapable of descending in phantom-like majesty, such as the heretics assumed his form to have been. But a heavenly apparition could not have mediated salvation to lost man. Hence it was that "our Lord, in recent times, having recapitulated all things in himself came to us, not as was in his power, but as

[1] iii. 18. 7.

[2] iv. 20. 4.

we were able to see him. He, indeed, had power to come to us in his immortal glory, but we were not in the least able to endure the greatness of his glory. And on that account he, who was the perfect bread of the Father, in appearing as man, presented himself to us as milk to infants, in order that we, nourished from the parental breast of his flesh and having grown accustomed by means of such a milk diet to eat and drink the Logos of God, may be able to possess in ourselves the bread of immortality, which is the spirit of the Father."[1] Probably this language reflected the sentiments of the great majority of Christians, for whom the church was a mighty supernatural institution whose rites mediated a magico-mystical salvation to humanity. The redeeming divinity, who was made real to the believer through the ceremonies of worship, needed himself to have been as thoroughly identified with humanity as the devotee now became identified with the Deity.

Justin and Irenaeus had many successors who championed the cause of orthodoxy against the heretics. The efficacy of the Eucharist and the hope of a future resurrection were too precious a possession to be left at the mercy of Gnostic skepticism. Tertullian of North Africa, a younger contemporary of Irenaeus, wrote extensively about the flesh of Christ and the resurrection of believers. He reveled in the contemplation of the dignity conferred by God on this poor and worthless substance, the human nature of man. Without this fleshly tabernacle it would have been utterly impossible for any soul to procure salvation; indeed, flesh is the very pivot on which the operation of salvation revolves. Apart from the flesh the soul would be incapable either of serving God or of being served by him. It is the flesh that experiences the baptismal bath for the soul's cleansing; in the ritual of consecration it is the flesh that is anointed; it is the flesh that receives the sign of the cross to fortify the soul; hands are laid on the flesh to induce illumination by the Spirit; and, most significant of all, it is the flesh that "feeds on the body and blood of Christ in order that the soul also may fatten on God."[1]

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[1] iv. 38. 1.

Tertullian emphatically affirmed that it was necessary for Christ to possess a genuinely human body if he were to deliver men from the sin and condemnation under which Adam had fallen. Had Christ possessed only an angelic body, as some of the heretics were wont to assert, that might have been sufficient to make him a savior of angels but not a savior of human nature. Since his mission was to save man, who had been left in a perishing state by Adam's sin, the divine and human had of necessity to be intermingled in Christ's person. The familiar argument is repeated: "Because the flesh of Christ which committed no sin itself resembled that which had sinned, resembled it in its constitutional nature but not in the corruption it received from Adam, therefore we affirm that there was in Christ the same flesh as that whose nature in man is sinful. In the flesh, therefore, is it that sin has been abolished because in Christ the same flesh is maintained without sin, which in man was not so maintained." Again, "in putting on our flesh he made it his own; in making it his own he made it sinless."[1]

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[1] *Resurrection of the Flesh* viii.

at this is
ore Pauline.

For Tertullian, as for Justin and Irenaeus, the Christian salvation reached its consummation in the resurrection of the body. This, again, is a convincing argument for believing in the genuine incarnation of Christ. When the heretics quoted Paul to the effect that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (I Cor. 15:50), Tertullian answered with another Pauline text: "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:22). Tertullian was quite ready to charge Paul with indiscretion if his language were to be so understood as to deny that flesh and blood partook of eternal life. For was not Jesus at the present moment sitting at the right hand of the Father and in full possession of his risen body made of flesh and blood just like that of men, only purer in character? When he ascended into heaven he displayed the same substantial form by which he had been known when on earth, and when he returns to execute judgment he will be readily recognized by those who pierced him. Meditating on this assurance, Tertullian exclaims: "Be at ease, O flesh and blood; in Christ you have seized both heaven and the Kingdom of God."[1]

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[1] *Flesh of Christ* xvi.

Tertullian thought to prove the reality of Christ's flesh on historical as well as theological grounds. The gospel story of the nativity seemed to furnish irrefutable evidence, since "there is no birth without flesh and no flesh without birth."[2] To the charge that it was unbecoming in a deity to alter his form, and particularly to take on the flesh of a mortal, Tertullian replied that "with God nothing is impossible except that which he does not will." And to say that a holy God could not enter impure human flesh is to overlook the fact that Christ had cleansed the flesh of its Adamic taint. Moreover, Jesus proved himself to be truly man by the literal exercise of those functions which belong to a human body. When heretics objected that it would be impossible for a God to be crucified, or for a son of God to die, because the thing would be absurd, Tertullian replied that the fact of Jesus' death and burial and resurrection was certain just "because it was impossible." If an event seems

[1] *Resurrection of the Flesh* xlviii–li.

[2] *Flesh of Christ* i.

impossible to men, this perplexity is the most valid sort of proof that divine power is at work. Those who try to relieve the difficulty by alleging that Christ's body was composed of sidereal substance are equally in error. Christ's death, like his birth, exhibited all the evidences of fleshly reality. While Christ was truly divine there was, however, nothing supernatural about his physical constitution. It was not a new kind of flesh miraculously acquired, or of any different texture or essence from that of man. It was absolutely normal flesh, untarnished by Adam's sin. Not the sinful flesh, but sin in the flesh, had been abolished by Christ. Both Old Testament prophecy and Jesus' historical career furnished ample evidence, in the opinion of Tertullian, to support this position. On the human side Christ perpetuated the stock of Adam, descended through Abraham and David, and was at the same time the Son of God, all in accord with prophecy.

Thanks largely to the activity of the Gnostics, orthodox Christendom by the year 200 had elaborately affirmed the necessity of belief in the full and perfect humanity of its divine Christ during the period of his earthly manifestation. Unbelieving heretics, now effectively differentiated from the majority in the church, were forced to constitute themselves into separate bodies. Their persistence was lamented and upbraided by orthodox preachers throughout the third and fourth centuries, but the arguments used against them were essentially a repetition of those that had been advanced by Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. No other arguments were necessary. The validity of the sacraments, the present divinization of the worshiper, and the resurrection of believers were values too precious to be sacrificed to Gnostic doubts about the human reality of the Christian Savior.[1]

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[1] The following examples, typical of thinking in the third and fourth centuries, may be of interest. Cyprian of North Africa, who fell a victim to persecution in the year 258, denied the possibility of salvation to any separatist party. Only those who have the orthodox church for mother could have God for Father, since the "flesh of Christ" is not available in any other communion (*Unity of the Church* vi and viii). In a treatise on the Lord's Prayer, when commenting on the petition "give us this day our daily bread," Cyprian remarks: "This can be understood both spiritually and literally, because either interpretation is divinely proficient for the attainment of salvation, for the bread of life is Christ and this bread does not belong to everyone but is ours; and just as we say 'Our Father' (because he is the Father of those who understand and believe), so we call it 'our bread,' the bread of those who, like us, eat his body. . . . . We receive his Eucharist daily for food of salvation" (xviii; cf. also *Epistle* 62 [63]). At Rome, Cyprian's contemporary, Novatian, although far less ecclesiastical in sentiment, affirms that "we would perceive no salvation in our Christ unless we recognized in him a body totally like that of ours" (*Trinity* x). Or, again, "this is our God; this is Christ, who as mediator between God and man put on man that he might conduct him back to the Father. Christ wished to be what man is, that man also might be able to be what Christ is" (*Vanity of Idols* xi). Some fifty years later an unknown Christian asks: "If, as these heretics say, Christ was without flesh and blood, of what sort of flesh or of what

While the Gnostics thought to strengthen their reverence for Christ by questioning the reality of his manhood, the orthodox, when defending the full humanity of Jesus, had no intention whatever of minimizing belief in his deity. By the vast majority of Christians it was commonly assumed that,

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sort of blood were the emblems, both bread and drink, which he gave, commanding his disciples by these means to preserve his memory" (*Adamantius* iv. 853*e*). Again, toward the middle of the fourth century, the sacramental virtue of the Eucharist is emphatically affirmed by Firmicus Maternus, who, in commenting upon similar rites in the pagan cults, admonishes his readers to "seek the bread of Christ, the cup of Christ, in order that the earthly and fragile contemptible nature of man may be nourished with immortal food. . . . . Sweet is the heavenly nourishment. Sweet is the food of God. Nor has it in it the sad pain of wretched hunger. It removes from the marrow of men the virus of former poison. . . . . It is a bread by which the misery of death is conquered. . . . . Here immortal life is conferred" (*Error of Profane Religions* xviii). Near the end of the fourth century Gregory of Nyssa writes: "Since the God who was manifest mingled himself with perishable nature in order that humanity might be apotheosized by the communion with his Godhead, in accordance with the plan of his grace, he disseminates himself in all believers by means of that flesh whose substance is of bread and wine, mingling himself with the body of believers, so that by union with the immortal, man also might share incorruption" (*Catechetical Oration* xxxvii. 12). Similarly, Hilary of Poitiers, after citing John 6:57 f., remarks that "there is no room left for doubt regarding the verity of the flesh and blood. For now, both from the declaration of the Lord himself and from our faith, it is truly flesh and truly blood. And these when eaten and drunk bring it to pass that both we are in Christ and Christ is in us" (*Trinity* viii. 14).

although Jesus had appeared in real flesh, he had also been really a god in the flesh. This seemed true as a matter of course, since he who was now an object of worship in the church was identical with the individual who had once lived on earth. His dignified status had become established in the faith of his devotees a long time before circumstances forced on them the more academic task of defending his divine constitution as a historical person. Indeed, it is quite probable that strictly within the Christian society at this time no occasion would have arisen to question the deity of the earthly Jesus. Although the manner of his deification was variously explained, no one doubted the essential fact itself.

It was the necessity of defending the godhood of Jesus against criticism from without that forced this problem on the Christians of the second century. Jews accused them of worshiping a man, which from a Jewish point of view was an act more heinous than that of crucifying one who had been falsely called a god. Gentiles soon learned to repeat the charge of folly against the worshipers of Christ, at the same time adding that Christians were atheists. Whether they revered a dead man or an inferior demon made little difference in the eyes of Gentiles. It still remained true that Christians were not devotees of the great gods of the Roman world, but were in effect enemies of those mighty supernatural powers in which heathen society placed its trust. On the other hand, Christians, confident that loyalty to Christ and faithful adherence to the rites of the church constituted the one efficient religion, undertook to refute the accusations of their enemies. To the charge of worshiping a crucified man they replied that Jesus was now a god in heaven, and had been such even while on earth. When accused of atheism because they refused allegiance to the heathen deities, they asserted the superiority of Jesus over all competitors and made him the divine force immediately responsible for both the creation and the maintenance of the cosmos.

his too was Paul

What evidence valid for outsiders could be offered in proof of the claim that Jesus was God? And how was it possible for both deity and humanity to be embraced in the same individual? These were the problems that taxed to the limit the dialectical resources of the intellectual leaders responsible for defending the existence of the new religion whose ministrations had already become precious in their experience. A more practical and less speculative type of person, like Ignatius, might have been content to affirm traditional Christian belief and anathematize the skeptics. But Justin, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Tertullian, and others of like philosophical temper endeavored to demonstrate by logic the rectitude of their convictions. Even so, they spoke, as it were, from the pulpit of the church rather than from the platform of the lecture hall, and their arguments partook quite as much of the character of a new Christian mythology as of a new Christian philosophy. This result was inevitable in view of the rich inheritance received by them from their predecessors in the faith.

At the outset it had been assumed by Christians ? that Jesus during his earthly career had manifested but dimly, if at all, the qualities of deity. For the first believers he had been essentially an apotheosized man, and he long remained such in the popular faith of the masses of Christendom. In its most original form, worship of him had been directed toward that glorified individual who had been raised from the dead and elevated to the dignity of a god in the heavens. Ever afterward he retained this honor unimpaired, but in the course of time his earthly career was brought more and more into conformity with his post-resurrection godhood. Soon it was discovered that he had displayed traits of deity even before the crucifixion. Striking incidents from his career indicative of this belief were zealously recounted in the meetings of the worshiping congregations. Teachers and preachers reminded their audiences of numerous occasions when Jesus had risen above the normal level of a human being and had disclosed in his deeds and words clear evidence that divinity, either acquired or inherent, had been resident in his person previous to his death and ascent to heaven.

But what are the dates of the Gospels?

Gradually the apotheosizing process was pushed back to an earlier and earlier period in Jesus' career. On the Mount of Transfiguration he had shared heavenly glory with Moses and Elijah. From the very beginning of his public activity he had been endowed with the divine Spirit empowering him to speak marvelous words of wisdom, to fulfil significant predictions of the prophets, to resist with success the wiles of Satan, to perform wonderful acts of healing, and to raise the dead. Indeed, through the intervention of the Spirit he had entered the world by a miraculous birth. These evidences were heroic and legendary in nature—mythical rather than syllogistic in form—as were the similar traditions regarding many of the hero divinities whom Gentiles had formerly served. The populace, for whom a picturesque tradition is always more convincing than cold logic, felt no hesitation in believing that the deity of Jesus had been clearly demonstrated by miraculous displays in connection with his earthly life.

The more intellectually inclined apologists, moved by the philosopher's interest in metaphysical speculation, endeavored to supplement tradition by directing attention to the prenatal career of Jesus. They undertook to demonstrate that his godhood antedated not only his resurrection, or his birth from the Virgin Mary, but even the creation of the world. This way of thinking had been foreshadowed in the letters of Paul, who spoke of Openly declared. Christ's emptying himself of his former divine authority before descending from heaven to display on earth an exemplary humility later to be rewarded by elevation to a new divine dignity (Phil. 2:1–10). But for Paul Jesus was not strictly an incarnate god. He was only a pre-existing spirit who ? first attained to full lordship after a humble life of servitude on earth. Later theologians were more ready to permit a greater display of his prenatal divinity by Jesus during the period of his dwelling in the flesh. They bore witness to a belief that he explicitly declared himself to have been a companion of God before ever Abraham had lived, and to have come to earth with the specific purpose of displaying his previous heavenly glory. This type of Christology was conspicuously embodied in the Fourth Gospel.

Emphasis on the pre-existence of Christ involved dangerous affinities with Gnosticism, in which Jesus was pre-eminently a being from heaven. But once orthodoxy had fortified itself against heresy by insisting on the genuineness of Jesus' fleshly body, greater freedom was felt in developing the notion of his pre-earthly deity. Henceforth the main drift of dialectical orthodoxy was in this direction, which tended to subordinate the older popular interest in the man who had become a god and to magnify the figure of the god who had become incarnate. The historical career of Jesus was no longer chiefly esteemed as evidence of the process by which he had attained to divine dignity, or exhibited in his life a sufficient demonstration of God's interest in humanity. On the contrary, it revealed only inadequately the activities of a preexistent being whose full manifestation of his godhood had in a measure been held in check by the limitations of the human flesh in which he had appeared. By an assiduous cultivation of interpretative skill and the employment of a vigorous dialectic Christian intellectuals strove to lift the veil and penetrate beyond the beginning of all created things to discover more convincing evidence of the deity of Jesus.

But all this was
in Paul. "Not after
t flesh"

The relation of deity to humanity was already a widely discussed subject in the schools of the heathen philosophers where the Christian leaders had received their education. Here they had been taught that the world was of divine origin and divinely sustained, but a wide gulf separated the fountainhead of deity from the present order of existence. Specific and temporal entries of the supreme God into the world, such as the uneducated Christian popularly supposed to have occurred in many Old Testament scenes and in the career of Jesus, when a voice from heaven at the time of his baptism or on the Mount of Transfiguration declared him to be the Son of God, were not easily imagined. God as ultimately conceived was immovable, impassible, ineffable, incomprehensible, and to be described only by negative predicates contrasting with all that belongs to the changing and finite world of nature and men. The philosopher, particularly if he were a Stoic or a Neoplatonist—and educated Christians for several centuries inherited extensively from these schools—could not believe that the supreme Deity was immediately active in the making of human history. His power was operative only at second hand, as an outstreaming of divine energy in the form of a pervading rationality called Logos, or an emanation of intelligence sometimes called Mind. In this atmosphere of metaphysical speculation the Christian apologists developed a new technique for demonstrating to their readers that Jesus ought to be called God. By identifying the historical individual with the Logos the former acquired new divine credentials that were philosophically defensible.

The Apologists were not entirely original in their attempt to employ the concept of the Logos to interpret the picturesque traditions of Judaism and Christianity. Philo had made a beginning in this direction, but his work had not been thoroughgoing. In his usage the Logos was still a somewhat mythical figure serving as an impersonal or angelic agency to assist the supreme God in his operations; it was not strictly a metaphysical substance expanding into personality as the vicegerent of Deity in his dealings with the finite world.[1] Similarly, Paul's Christ, although a pre-existent spirit that entered the world in God's service, did not supplant the latter; "God was in Christ" in a very immediate sense for Paul. And the author of the Fourth Gospel, while he explicitly affirmed Jesus to be the divine Logos, permitted a quite unphilosophical identification of the "Father" with his historically active "Son," Christ. He and God were one; he who had seen Christ had seen the Father (10:30 ff.; 14:9 ff.). Theologians like Justin and Tertullian were more rigid in their adherence to proper metaphysical reasoning. They avoided the popular disposition to mingle God with Christ on the stage of finite history and sought to account for their unity and diversity by reference to a pretemporal stage in the evolution of divine being, when Logos had constituted the primal essence and substance of all deity. In this sense it was proper to say that the Logos had been from eternity one with the Father.

The differentiation of the Logos from the Father was also placed before the creation of the world. God had permitted the Logos, as a specific personality, to come into existence, to be "begotten," before the dawn of history. Yet in this act the divine substance itself had not been sundered or diminished, any more than the sun is lessened by a ray of light streaming forth from its mass. God is still the full godhead even when the Logos has become a distinct person, and the Logos is still eternally unbegotten as to substance even though as a person he has a beginning. Once the Logos had been "begotten," he brought the world into existence and thereafter directed its destinies. He was the instrument of divine revelation in the Old Testament; he was the source of all true wisdom among the heathen philosophers, who were thus Christian in so far as they were not the victims of demons; and, finally, he had appeared in human flesh on earth in the person of Jesus Christ. Thus he is a fully competent "second" god; in this form only was the Deity capable of entering human history. Therefore Christ is to be unhesitatingly called God, and devoutly worshiped. Though distinct in person, he is eternally one in substance with the infinite Deity, while the latter retains his proper attributes of invisibility, immobility, and impassibility thought necessary to the metaphysical argument.

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[1] On Philo's teaching about the Logos see especially E. Bréhier, *Les idées philosophiques et religieuses de Philon d'Alexandrie* (Paris, 1908), pp. 83–111.

The extensive literary activity of theologians who concerned themselves with speculations about the Logos undoubtedly gives them an importance for moderns far in excess of that which they had for the rank and file of the church in their own day. Philosophical problems were not a vital concern of the majority, who were already accustomed to find a satisfactory demonstration of Jesus' deity in the popular traditions regarding the display of God's wisdom, power, and glory manifest in the historical career of the heroic Savior. The formal profession of faith familiarly termed the "Apostles' Creed," the chief items of which were widely known in Christendom during the latter half of the second century, confessed to belief in a divine redeemer who had been the Son of God because begotten of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit. After his execution under Pilate he had arisen from the dead and was seated in authority at the right hand of God in the heavens. These credentials were quite sufficient to justify the worshipful attitude of the average man. He felt no need of philosophy to support his confidence in the ability of a savior whom God had begotten and anointed through the operations of his Spirit. Speculations about the prenatal constitution of Jesus can have concerned only the few; the majority had little appetite for metaphysics. An unschooled artisan, like the shoemaker Theodotus, or a practical banker like his younger contemporary of the same name, deemed it a sufficient explanation of Jesus' antecedents to say that he had been filled with the dynamic of God. The power of the Deity was manifestly present in one whose life on earth had been marked by displays of so unusual a character. Or, if this language seemed inadequate, one said that God himself in very person had temporarily dwelt among men, as even now his presence was experienced in the rites of the church. Did not the Scriptures say of men themselves that they were gods?

The intellectuals, too, were not unmindful of the practical values attaching to the worship of Jesus as a means of insuring a full experience of Deity for the members of the Christian society. As Eusebius says, quoting an unknown writer of the third century: "I speak of Justin and Miltiades and Tatian and Clement and many others by all of whom Christ is spoken of as God. For who does not know the books of Irenaeus, of Melito and of the rest declaring that Christ is God and man, and how many psalms and hymns composed by the faithful brethren from the beginning hail Christ as the Logos of God and call him God."[1]

Henceforth Christendom possessed in Jesus a fully authenticated deity to whom both unlettered men and scholars, with equally strong convictions, could render sincere devotion. His deification might be connected with the triumphant events following his death, or with incidents in his glorious career on earth; or, for those who felt so inclined, his attainment to personal godhood might be dated before the creation of the world. Thus the new religion had successfully equipped itself with a new God appropriate to the experiences and needs of the growing Christian society.

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[1] *Hist.* v. 28. 5 f.

How smart !
The reverse was !
the true order.

CHAPTER SEVEN

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JESUS AND JEHOVAH

GENTILES had felt less restraint than Jews in the use of honorific terms to designate Jesus. The exalted Messiah, as a divinized hero, had from the beginning been an object of worship in gentile Christian communities, and naturally one had no hesitation in ascribing to the Lord Jesus Christ the full dignity of deity. For these worshipers Jesus exalted to heaven was a fully divine being, if not indeed the all-sufficient God of their faith.[1] By the end of the first century the popular feeling that Christ was God had begun to appear in Christian books. Even in the later New Testament writings one finds an occasional phrase, with a pronounced liturgical flavor, used in glorification of the new God. He was "our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13; II Pet. 1:1). The doubting Thomas, when granted a vision of Jesus risen, adoringly exclaimed: "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). The Scriptures, employed in the services of worship, furnished texts readily suggesting that Christ while on earth had been a deity.

But Paul first!

When in Latin?

Paul. John.
Both?

to be sure

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[1] Commonly θεός, but sometimes also ὁ θεός. Latin writers called him *deus* and *deus noster*, as well as *dominus* (κύριος, δεσπότης.)

The author of the First Gospel reverently affirmed that Jesus was properly called "Immanuel," meaning "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). Another Christian discovered in Holy Writ that Jehovah himself had long ago designated Jesus as an object of worship, not alone among men but also among the angels, and had said of him, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb. 1:6–8). And one evangelist opened his book with the explicit declaration that Jesus had been an incarnate divinity.[1]

In the rites of their cult during the early decades of the second century gentile believers heartily claimed for Jesus all the prerogatives of deity. Pliny had been correctly informed when he reported to the Emperor Trajan that the Christians of Bithynia were accustomed to sing a hymn to Christ as God. At the same time Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch in Syria, reveled in the imagery of a Christian savior who was "our God, Jesus the Christ." In a similar vein the bishop proclaimed the church at Ephesus to be a group of worshipers existing by the will of "Jesus Christ our God." The liturgical tone of salutations and farewells seemed especially to demand the recognition of Jesus as "our God." The same elevated state of feeling inspired Ignatius, when writing to the Roman Christians, to beg that they would do nothing to rob him of his prospective martyrdom. He would follow the example of Jesus: "Permit me to be an imitator of the sufferings of my God." In fact, by a vivid figure of speech it could be said that believers, through participation in the rite of the Eucharist, shared in Jesus' sufferings and were thus "imitators of God" and had their hearts "kindled in the blood of God."[1]

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[1] John 1:1; also in 1:18 *μονογενὴς θεός* is probably the original reading.

By the middle of the second century the main body of Christendom, including the commonality of worshipers as well as an increasing number of philosophers, had arrived at the settled conviction that Jesus was both man and God. Jewish hesitancy in designating as God one who had lived like a man on earth had been completely overcome. For a century the new religious movement had been growing more and more at home in a gentile world where it had been able to avail itself of a wealth of new imagery suitable for expressing more elaborately its appreciation of the heroic personality of its Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This was already Paul's teaching

Everyone recognized a plurality of supernatural beings. Pagans, Jews, and Christians shared alike in this belief. Both kindly and malevolent spirits were thought to be constantly in action, but Gentiles had been less successful than Jews in arranging these powers into specific hierarchies. Early Christianity inherited from its Hebrew ancestry a definite classification of all spirits into two clearly differentiated and sharply antagonistic groups. On the one side stood God, the creator and ruler of the universe, who was served by many subordinates. Sometimes ministering angels acted as his mediators while at other times his Wisdom, his Utterance, or his Holy Spirit manifested the Deity's presence among men. On the other side stood Satan with an army of ready helpers bent on working deception and disaster in the world. Gentile Christians, who easily adapted themselves to this dualistic imagery, relegated all their former gods to the category of wicked demons.

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[1] Relevant passages in Ignatius are *Rom.*, *Salut.;* vi. 2; *Eph.*, *Salut.;* i. 1; vii. 2; xv. 3; *Smyr.* i. 1; vi. 1; x. 1; *Tral.* vii. 1; *Polyc.* viii. 3; cf. also Acts 20:28; I Clem. ii. 1; Polycarp *Eph.* xii. 2; Melito vii.

Christians had no difficulty in defining the status of Jesus in relation to the hierarchy of demons. He was the archenemy of Satan and all his devilish assistants. Ultimately the forces of evil would be completely overwhelmed; the fires of eternal punishment awaited them and all men whom they succeeded in leading astray.[1] But at present, thoroughly alarmed by Christ's entry into the world, the Satanic powers were raging with all their wicked fury against mankind, and against the Christian church in particular. They had been the source of all the errors and evils that had prevailed in the heathen world before Christianity arose.

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[1] Justin *Apol.* ii. 7.

Well Lord. It was a commonplace to-day, Either Christ as divine or man as nearly so. Take your choice – Docetism or total depravity!

At present they were the cause of bitter opposition to the new religion. The rise of heresy was a result of their fiendish work, and occasionally they were successful even in leading Christians into idolatry. They also enabled the heathen to perform miracles and display a wisdom counterfeiting Christian teaching, and they were ever deceiving mankind as to the truth and power of the Christian revelation.[1] Sometimes enemies suggested that Jesus had performed his mighty works by using the magical arts of the pagans, and thus he was in league with the demons. But this opinion was vigorously denounced as an unforgivable sin. Jesus had no place in the kingdom of demons; he belonged exclusively to the Kingdom of God.[2]

The problem of fitting Jesus into the family of good spirits was not so easily solved. Apologists took pains to show that even when they rejected all heathen gods they still revered a wide range of divine powers. It was absurd to call Christians atheists simply because they refused allegiance to wicked demons. Justin stated the case clearly in a familiar passage:

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[1] See especially H. Weinel, *Die Wirkungen des Geistes und der Geister im nachapostolischen Zeitalter bis auf Irenäus* (Freiburg, 1899), pp. 1–26.

[2] See Mark 3:22–29; Justin *Apol.* i. 30; *Dial.* lxix. 7; lxxxv. 1–3; Origen *Cels.* ii. 49; *Clementine Recognitions* i. 58; Lactantius *Inst.* v. 3. While Christian apologists never conceded that Jesus was a magician, they were aware of the ease with which he might be suspected of practicing the art. Hence they sometimes preferred to stress his fulfilment of prophecy rather than his miracles in proof of his deity. Yet Christians always insisted on the superior efficacy of Jesus' name in exorcism. Justin could say that it was, indeed, to effect the destruction of the demons that Jesus had become incarnate, and he asked his

> We confess that we are atheists with respect to gods of such sort but not with respect to the most true God and father of righteousness and temperance and other virtues, who is unmixed with evil. We revere and worship him, and the Son who came forth from him and taught us these things, and the host of other good angels who attend him and are made in his likeness, and the prophetic spirit. These we honor reasonably and truly, and to everyone who wishes to learn how we have been taught we ungrudgingly transmit this information.[1]

As to gradations of dignity, next to the Father, Christians hold "the Son, who is truly God, in the second place, and the prophetic spirit in the third."[2] Justin neglects to specify the relative status of the "good angels," and he is not yet aware of the fur-

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readers to recall the numerous instances when Christians had expelled demons that had resisted all other exorcists (*Apol.* ii. 6; *Dial.* xxx. 2 f.; lxxvi. 5 f.; lxxxiii. 4; lxxxv. 2–4). The belief that Christ heads a kingdom fatal to that of the demons was a firm conviction of the ancient church, e.g., Tatian *Address to Greeks* vii–xviii; Tertullian *Apol.* xxii f.; Irenaeus *Heresies* ii. 31. 2; 32. 4; *Apostolic Preaching* 96 (end); *Clementine Homilies* ix. 8 ff.

Nevius.
Wm James

[1] *Apol.* i. 6.

[2] *Ibid.* 13.

ther complications to arise when the Virgin Mary and deceased martyrs and saints had been added to the membership of the heavenly hierarchy.

The relation of the God Jesus to the supreme Deity was a problem that caused Christendom an immense amount of concern for many centuries. Probably the issue was never so all absorbing for the populace as it was for certain theologians whose numerous books served to magnify their importance in later ages. But even the most naïve gentile convert must have known that Christian preachers had from the outset scathingly condemned polytheism and had insisted that all true religion would recognize only one God, the creator and ruler of the universe, who had revealed himself to the Hebrews in ancient times and whose will was now being made known anew within the Christian congregations where the Scriptures were highly prized. Yet in these assemblies Jesus Christ was so loyally and reverentially regarded that, for all practical purposes, he was now an all-sufficient deity. Worshipers rendered him the full reverence that had formerly been accorded their heathen divinities, he was central in the new liturgy, his votaries addressed him in their prayers and hymns, they shared his divine life through participation in the ceremonies of the church, they felt safe under the present protection of his favor, and on their tombstones they inscribed his name as the God to whom they intrusted their future. Under these circumstances one can easily imagine that the Hebrew Jehovah might suffer much unconscious neglect.

It used to be assumed that Christian preachers in the early centuries had with difficulty induced gentile converts to believe in the deity of Christ. But nowadays one is confident that such was not the case. While Jewish Christians had approached the idea with caution, Gentiles laid hold upon it with avidity. For the most part they demanded no philosophical justification of their belief, such as later seemed necessary to the more intellectually inclined defenders of the new movement. The majority of the converts found in the picturesque figure of the hero honored in the services of the worshiping congregations a sufficient ground for faith. They were accustomed to the use of myth as a medium for the communication of truth. Although they accepted the Old Testament and respected the creator whom it revealed, reverence for Christ entered more immediately and vitally into the making of their experience and the structure of their piety. Theologians needed the Hebrew God to insure the validity of their arguments when they cited sacred texts to justify the existence of the Christian institution or sought to demonstrate from prophecy that Christianity was the only valid religion. But the populace were quite adequately served by the Lord Jesus Christ. Gentile converts

h. D. is [illegible] the
y. Not the [illegible].
[illegible] which fashion
Christ.

were as a rule entirely willing to accord him all the honors of deity.

More cautious leaders sometimes felt this adoration to be extravagant and to need correction. In his treatise on prayer[1] Origen urged that one ought never to direct formal petitions to any created being, not even to Christ himself, but only to God, to whom Christ also had prayed. All prayers should be addressed to God the Father, mention at the same time being made of Jesus' name, in accordance with the scriptural promise, "Verily, verily, I say to you that if you ask anything of my Father he will give it to you in my name" (John 16:23 f.). Those who prayed directly to the Son, whether naming the Father or not, were guilty of a "sin of ignorance." But Origen was not representative of the masses of Christians, and the very note of reproval in his language attests the prevalence of the contrary disposition.[2]

It was not Christ, but the God of the Old Testament, who was threatened by neglect. One might almost infer that he had been completely ignored in the primitive days of the gentile church.[3] Certainly

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[1] Chaps. xv f.

[2] Origen is somewhat more conciliatory in *Celsus* viii. 26, where he allows the propriety of praying to the "only-begotten Logos," requesting him to pass the petition on to "his God and our God."

[3] This hypothesis has been forcefully presented by A. C. McGiffert in *The God of the Early Christians* (New York, 1924), pp. 41–88.

But who was Christ? The revelation of this God.

popular interest in the Lord Jesus Christ was much keener and more vital than was the attachment of the average gentile Christian to the God of the ancient Hebrews. Yet the Old Testament was one of the church's most valuable instruments for nourishing the religious life and faith of the community. This anomalous situation could hardly continue permanently without creating a conflict of interests. The relation between the Hebrew God and the Christian Christ had to be more exactly defined if both deities were to maintain a position of honor in Christendom. But from the first the problem was not primarily an intellectual or speculative one; it was fundamentally conditioned by practical and emotional interests. The Old Testament had been built into the very substructure of the Christian institution, while the worship of Christ had become fundamental to all Christian experience. If loyalties toward the Deity were to be logically unified, it might seem that either the Scriptures with their Jehovah would have to be discarded or else the character of the Christian worship would have to be radically altered. But to have removed either support from the rising Christian edifice would have been to undermine its very foundations and so to threaten its collapse.

It was Gnostic teaching, again, that first precipitated controversy. Its advocates were sensitive to a variety of influences in their environment.

They were much impressed by the unhappy state of people in the present world, where the evil forces about them seemed inseparable from the normal processes of nature. So pervasive was the power of wickedness that its presence could not be explained as a mere accident in human history, a demonic invasion of a world otherwise good. Evil was of the very essence of this material existence. Hence it was the chief function of religion to deliver mankind from the present corrupt age. At this point the Gnostics found themselves in hearty agreement with the apostle Paul. But they were not so fortunate as he had been in believing that a final destruction of all wickedness was soon to be accomplished by the triumphant return of Christ. Jewish Christian eschatology did not seem to them an adequate answer to the vital problems of an afflicted humanity seeking release from the hostile forces of a thoroughly demonized universe.

The soul of man, his true self, was the specific entity that needed liberation from its present bondage. The Gnostics were not content to say, in Pythagorean fashion, that the soul was incarcerated in the body as in a tomb from which it would be delivered by death. They believed that both while in the body and after its release the human spirit was the victim of demonic powers that attacked it on earth and blocked its way to heaven. In order to effect escape from its foes it needed counter and more powerful assistance from the sphere of deity. The natural man was in a hopeless condition. Deliverance must come from without, mediated by the sacraments and teachings of a religious institution. But this institution could be sufficient only when by its rites and creeds it provided man with an entirely new revelation and insured him access to new divine power capable of liberating the soul, not merely from its body of flesh, but also from all demonic enemies that compassed it about both here and hereafter.

A deliverer who could successfully thwart the demons and rescue the souls of men from entanglement in the meshes of evil matter needed to be himself a messenger from another and better sphere of existence. Even the God of the Old Testament fell under suspicion. Since he was the creator and ruler of this material world, which for the Gnostics was wholly evil, it seemed impossible to connect any effective plan of salvation with his operations. To make him the author of redemption for a world that he had originally created was like dividing a kingdom against itself. Nor could this Deity have been the creator of the human spirit, else in their natural state mortals would have been more comfortable in the world of their maker. Therefore both the origin of the soul and the possibility of its salvation were connected with another order of being entirely outside of and superior to the present cosmos.

Who had the [illegible] in the Church?
Marcion!

In Christianity as a sacramentally operating institution Gnostic converts believed that they had discovered the genuine way of salvation. The needed savior was just this Christ, if only his person and work were properly defined. He was a redeemer who had heretofore been altogether unknown to mankind. To suppose that he had been the expected Jewish Messiah described by the prophets was to misunderstand completely his ancestry. He belonged to an order of divine being far superior to, and entirely independent of, the God of the Hebrews. The latter, having created an evil world, was necessarily bad and incapable of devising or mediating genuine salvation. But Christ had proved himself an effective savior; members of the worshiping congregations knew this from personal experience. When the heretics were excommunicated by the orthodox majority, the resulting emotion only heightened their assurance. Christ had proved sufficient for their needs, hence he must have descended from the realm of the previously unknown God of true goodness to bring man the knowledge indispensable for salvation.

There were still two gods. The Gnostics were not concerned with the dogma of monotheism, which Judaism had injected so inconveniently into the theological thinking of gentile Christianity, nor were they troubled by the questionings of Greek philosophers. Salvation was the subject of their supreme concern, and Christ was its genuinely divine mediator. Gnostic piety was ardent in its appreciation of Jesus as God and Savior. Since the devotional portions of the Old Testament were no longer available for them, Gnostics addressed to Christ new hymns and prayers that glow with a warmth of feeling worthy of an ancient psalmist. Thus Thecla pours out her soul in gratitude: "O my God, God of this house where the light has shone for me, Christ Jesus, Son of God, my helper in prison, my helper before governors, my helper in fire, my helper among wild beasts, thou art very God, and to thee be the glory throughout eternity. AMEN."[1]

Note.

The proposal to eliminate the Old Testament from the church, and thus to dismiss Jehovah from further consideration by Christians, was most explicitly advocated by Marcion.[2] At Rome he was a rival of Justin, who says of him that he had been led astray by demons and by their assistance had persuaded "many persons of every race of men to utter blasphemies and deny that the maker of this universe is God." Nor is his son the Christ whom believers have been accustomed to find foretold in the prophets. Marcion preached belief in "some other God beside the maker of all things, and likewise another Son." Since this supreme Deity was unknown except through the revelation of him in Jesus, the latter was, for all practical purposes, the actual God of the Marcionites.

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[1] *Acts of Paul* xlii. For further examples see McGiffert, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–64; M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford, 1924), pp. 228 ff.; W. Köhler, *Die Gnosis* (Tübingen, 1911), pp. 34 ff.

[2] He was not a philosopher, but a tradesman interested in shipping, who had come from Pontus to Rome about A.D. 140. After breaking with the Roman church he led an independent movement that survived for centuries, with branches in various parts of the Empire. The Marcionite communities commonly passed for Christian churches, despite the protests of the orthodox. The most extensive study on Marcion is by A. von Harnack, *Marcion: Das Evangelium vom fremden*

Marcion and his followers believed they had made a discovery that was of inestimable importance for the welfare of humanity. They must have realized that something would have to be sacrificed by surrendering the Old Testament. They could not keep the Bible of the Hebrews and at the same time reject its God. Marcion boldly proposed a remedy. For the Hebrew Scriptures he would substitute a collection of Christian writings containing a knowledge of the true God whom Jesus had revealed. Irenaeus complained that Marcion had mutilated the Gospel of Luke and dismembered the epistles of Paul in order to obtain a scripture in

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Gott, 2. Aufl. (Leipzig, 1924). The principal ancient notices are Justin *Apol.* i. 26 and 58; Irenaeus *Heresies* i. 27. 2–4; iii. 3. 4; 4. 3; iv. 6. 2; 8. 1; Tertullian *Against Marcion; Against All Heresies* vi; *Prescriptions* xxx and xxxviii; Hippolytus *Refutation* vii. 29–31. See also F. Loofs, *Theophilus von Antiochen adversus Marcionem und die anderen theologischen Quellen bei Irenaeus* (Leipzig, 1930).

conformity with his distinctive opinion that Jesus had come from the unknown God to abolish the law and the prophets along with the bad God whom the Jews revered. The Marcionites were fully aware of the value attaching to a revelation standardized in a sacred literature and mediated by a religious institution. They were as zealous as their rivals in maintaining an institutionally assured salvation. It is wrong to assume that they were primarily interested in speculative religion rather than in the church as a community of worshipers, and in the Christ whom it revered.

The Gnostics generally, and the Marcionites in particular, gave a great deal of attention to the rites of the cult by which they became attached to their divine deliverer and thus acquired the knowledge (*gnosis*) necessary for salvation. It greatly incensed certain of their opponents to see the followers of Marcion using in their religious ceremonies the material things of this world which, they said, had been created by the bad God whom they rejected. Was not their new deity simply a thief coming into this world to appropriate to himself the possessions of the God of the Old Testament? Marcion's god, as pictured by Tertullian, swoops down on an alien world to snatch man away from his creator, to steal sons from their father, pupils from their teacher, and servants from their master. Similar thievery characterized the rites of the Marcionite church. Its members baptize to their God in water that belongs to another, they stretch out their hands in prayer to a heaven that is the property of another, they kneel to their God on ground which belongs to another, they offer thanksgiving to their God over bread which is the property of another, and distribute alms and charity for the sake of their God when these gifts belong to the creator, the God of the Old Testament.[1] Even though the true God was "unknown," Christ who had revealed him was entirely sufficient for the rites of the Marcionite cult.

The more orthodox Christian philosopher came vigorously to the rescue of the Hebrew Scripture. It was essential to the dialectician that his deductions should proceed from valid premises, which as a Christian he found in the ancient body of revelation contained in the Old Testament. To cite the miracles of Jesus in proof of his divinity seemed to Justin an argument of only secondary worth. Opponents might still allege, with some measure of plausibility, that Jesus had been merely a skilful magician. The more important and irrefutable evidence of his supernatural qualifications lay in his extensive fulfilments of prophecy. One who observed how everything about Christ and Christianity had happened and still continued to happen in accordance with what had been predicted in the

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[1] Tertullian *Against Marcion* i. 23.

Scriptures long ago could no longer entertain a shadow of doubt regarding the divinity of the crucified man. It would have been quite unnatural to believe that this individual was the "first born son of the unbegotten God" had not testimonies concerning him been issued in advance and later fulfilled before the eyes of everybody.[1] The entire course of his life on earth had been ordered primarily with a view to demonstrating the fulfilment of prophecy. The events of his earthly career had no essential significance for him personally. As "pre-existent God" he needed no supernatural birth, no endowment by the Spirit at baptism, no assurances from his disciples at the time of his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, and no crucifixion. These occurrences had been entirely for the benefit of observers, who were thereby privileged to see in his fulfilment of prophecy the indubitable proof that he is Christ.[2]

The Old Testament was indispensable for the work of the converted philosopher. As a Christian he welcomed the doctrine of scriptural infallibility already current among the Jews. He said that heathen poets and philosophers were at a great disadvantage in having to rely simply on their own opinions, which at best were only vague promptings of divine wisdom. But Christians, having the prophets to instruct them, were privileged to read the very words of Almighty God. His Spirit had moved the mouths of the prophets even as the skilled performer manipulated a musical instrument. Without the Scriptures the Christian teacher, like his heathen rivals, would be left to expound mere human opinions; but, in possession of the Old Testament, he became the purveyor of the unerring wisdom of God. It was absurd to disbelieve revelation and to demand of the Deity a logical justification of truth such as one required of ordinary men.[1] The sacred book was the ground and source of all Christian wisdom. Just as those who wish to become expert in worldly knowledge cannot attain their goal unless they learn the tenets of the philosophers, in like manner Christians who wish to discipline themselves in piety will find guidance only in the divine oracles. "Brethren," says Hippolytus,[2] "there is one God, whom we know from no source other than the Holy Scriptures." He was seen in current events only as recent happenings proved to be the fulfilment of ancient prophecy. One need not doubt the present operations of Providence, or the ability of man to apprehend truth by the exercise of the logical faculty, but there is a higher plane on which the Christian philosopher moves where he acquires revealed truth not attainable by the exercise of the natural powers of the senses.[1]

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[1] Justin *Apol.* i. 30–53; Irenaeus *Apostolic Preaching* xlii.

[2] Justin *Dial.* lxxxvii f.

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[1] Athenagoras *Plea* vi f.; Clement of Alexandria *Strom*. v. 1. 4.

[2] *Against Noetus* ix.

Among the intellectuals of the Roman world antiquity was a highly coveted credential for all opinions. Christianity suffered from the charge of novelty; it was of recent origin and therefore was said to be unworthy of respect. Its defenders were able to turn the edge of this criticism by appeal to the Scriptures. They found it highly desirable to insist that this body of ancient revelation was properly a Christian possession. The new religion, when correctly appreciated, could not be considered a product of yesterday. Rather, it perpetuated a divine wisdom antedating all heathen civilization, even the creation of the world itself. When Justin's contemporaries slightingly remarked that Christ had been born only one hundred and fifty years ago, the Christian apologist appealed to the prophets. There he found Christ's career and the rise of Christianity clearly predicted long before the events, "first five thousand years before, then three thousand, then two thousand, then one thousand, and again eight hundred," as successive generations of prophets had appeared.[2]

The rise of Christianity had been predicted in ancient times, but that fact was not its only claim to respect. The religion itself had actually existed in consequence of Christ's continuous presence in the universe as the "first-born of God," the divine Logos, whose activity Scripture as well as Greek philosophy clearly attested. Of this Logos every race of men had been partakers, and when they followed its leading they were in reality Christians many centuries before the birth of Jesus. The "new" religion was, indeed, as old as Socrates and Plato and the early Stoics, or other philosophers and poets and historians, who had displayed any evidence whatever of obedience to the enlightening influence of the Logos disseminated throughout the world.[1] Had not the philosophers themselves said that the Logos was the author of the universe?[2]

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[1] Clement of Alexandria *loc. cit.*

[2] Justin *Apol.* i. 31. 8.

It was in Scripture, however, that one found unmistakable testimony to the antiquity of the Logos, and hence the evidence that Christianity, as a continuation and fulfilment of the Old Testament revelation, was the most venerable of all religions. The Jews, by rejecting Christ, had lost their birthright, and the Christian church had received full title to the heritage. While one retained the Bible of the Hebrews, the antiquity of Christianity was indorsed by no less an authority than the supreme God himself. And since he existed before all time, the religion of which he was the author was itself older than creation. Thus Arnobius reasoned.[3] Heathen religions all had a beginning and so once were "new." But Christianity goes back to the omnipotent and primal Deity, who is without beginning. Therefore Christianity is not new, even though it has but recently become generally known as a result of Christ's appearance on the stage of human history. Just why it is that the king and emperor of the universe only "a few hours ago"—as Arnobius' opponents averred—sent Christ from the dome of heaven to become the redeemer of the world must remain an inscrutable mystery hidden within the purposes of the Almighty. But no sensible man would question the validity of Christianity's claim to an antiquity superior to that enjoyed by any of its rivals. It owed this prestige to its scriptural authentication and its connection with the God of the Old Testament. Christianity was as old as Christ, Christ was as old as God, and God was older than time.[1]

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[1] *Ibid.* 5 and 46 ff.; ii. 13.

[2] Tertullian *Apol.* xxi. 10.

[3] *Against the Heathen* ii. 71 ff.

fue avenanto

Other considerations, somewhat less academic in form, made it desirable to emphasize belief in the Deity who had created and continued to sustain the material universe. Thoughtful Christians during the second and third centuries became increasingly empire-conscious. The primitive Jewish Christian expectation of an early destruction of the present order of society rapidly faded out, and with its disappearance—or the projection of the catastrophic event into the far-distant future—the existing status of things was more highly esteemed. Heathen culture now seemed less degenerate than had once been supposed. But when its virtues were at last discovered they were not justified in their own right. On the contrary, they had value because they were the works of the very God whom Christians revered as the creator of all that was useful and estimable in the experience of mankind. The conquest of the present world by Christianity necessitated allegiance to the God of the Hebrews by whom it had been created. Polytheism was vigorously condemned because it cultivated the worship of created things, while Christianity offered men knowledge of him who was the originator of the whole.

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[1] Clement of Alexandria *Exhortation* i. 6. 4.

Complex social forces were also influential. The membership of the churches was no longer composed exclusively of converts from among the lower and indigent classes. Gradually the new religion had been espoused by a growing number of persons more or less prominent in the economic, cultural, and political activities of the Empire. Their capacity to appreciate the blessings of civilization made it possible for them to respect the work of the Creator; and, conversely, they needed the God of the Old Testament to justify their own sense of present social values. The benefits of the imperial rule were now highly esteemed by Christians, despite the agonies of occasional persecu-

Not new
v. I. Cor. III. 21.
I Tim. II. 1, 2.
I Peter. II. 17

tions. Just because emperors were instruments for maintaining order in the world, even they are "ours," said Tertullian,[1] although he entertained no expectation that any ruler would ever be admitted to membership in the church. But already a trend of Christian thinking had set in which paved the way for the "conversion" of Constantine and the elevation of Christianity to the position of official state cult under Theodosius. The God of creation was now the creator and protector of emperors.

In the meantime Christians had made themselves at home in various callings, where their industry and frugality found suitable rewards. Their preachers had learned how to interpret Scripture so as to make possible the rich man's salvation.[2] Arnobius thought it quite proper to remind the persecutor, Diocletian, as evidence that Christianity was not an object of heaven's displeasure, that some Christians had grown very rich by recent trading in foodstuffs during a period of high prices.[3] Prosperity was assumed to be an evidence of divine approval, and accordingly emperors were advised that Christianity offered the afflicted state assistance from the most powerful of all deities concerned with the affairs of government and the prosperity of peoples. He was the God who had made the world and therefore was the only one who could be trusted to re-establish the social order. Of necessity he was the Deity whom the Old Testament revealed.

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[1] *Apol.* xxxiii. 1.

[2] See Clement of Alexandria's treatise on this subject.

[3] Arnobius *Against the Heathen* i. 16.

The majority of the gentile churches persistently rejected Gnostic innovations and clung to the older ways. Undoubtedly orthodoxy learned not a little from these minority movements, particularly from so determined and sincere a group as the disciples of Marcion. His proposal with reference to the Scriptures may well have stimulated a new interest in collecting and authorizing for use in the orthodox congregations distinctively Christian documents. But the older collection was also kept, and with it the Hebrew God remained. Not that the masses of gentile Christians especially needed him, since Christ was fully God, but they were as a whole unwilling to dispense with the ancient Scriptures. On the other hand, Christian intellectuals stood in sore need of a supreme Deity inseparably associated with the processes of world-history. Under these circumstances the major Christian groups unhesitatingly decided that their two deities should continue to be the Creator and Ruler of the universe revealed in the biblical records, and the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ honored in the faith and worship of the church.

Thus the new religion, whose early missionaries had declared it to be the gospel of pure monotheism, now seemed to have become a rigid ditheism; it possessed at least two gods, neither of which could be spared at the cost of the other. The one was necessary to insure the validity of a scriptural revelation thought essential to the existence of the church. Christianity, like Judaism, remained a religion of the authoritative book, hence the God of the Hebrews continued to be the God of the Christians. At the same time the second deity, Christ, had become inextricably knit into the life of the worshiping communities through the services he had rendered as the cult-hero of the new religious societies on gentile soil.

Although it may be said that the Hebrew Jehovah was Christianity's heritage from antiquity while the deified Christ of the church was its own fresh discovery, the latter was none the less essential to gentile believers of the second and third centuries. He had acquired the rank of full deity in the course of the new movement's transition from Palestinian to gentile soil. In a Jewish environment the risen Messiah was a genuinely supernatural figure who under the favor of God would overthrow forever the dominion of Lord Caesar, but with that accomplishment his duties were to end. He was not supremely God; he was neither the personal embodiment nor the divine double of Jehovah, but was merely the agent whom God had selected to perform a temporary service for human-

This was before 70.
Case made [illegible] into
these [illegible] creations of
later years.

ity. Yet the anticipated event had tremendous soteriological significance for the thinking of Jesus' Palestinian survivors who early took up residence in Jerusalem to await the fulfilment of the prophetic announcement that "the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple."

Gentiles felt less keenly the need for a hero to displace the deified Caesar. They desired a more personal deliverance from a sense of weakness and defeat in a world of daily conflicts with adverse circumstances and terrifying demonic powers. When Jewish Christians, less successful than they had at first hoped to be among their kinsmen, sought converts from among the Gentiles, Jesus was still presented in the rôle of deliverer from future judgment. This hope was not offensive to Gentiles, but they demanded a more immediate type of service from their patron divinities. The heroes of their faith were present lords of established cults through whose rites the favor of the god was made available for the protection and inspiration of the devotee. When a zealous Christian missionary, seeking to become all things to all men that by every means in his power he might save some, assured Gentiles that the risen Messiah of Palestinian Christianity might with entire propriety be viewed as a dying and rising divinity who could render unparalleled assistance to his adherents, Christ rapidly became the most loved and

Who sought this:
except Paul before
the fall of Jerusalem?

Was so from the
beginning

adored of all heroic redeemers worshiped in the ancient world. Ultimately he became enshrined so devoutly in the affections of his followers that no theoretical loyalty to monotheism as a Christian ideal, no inconvenience in accounting for his genuine humanity while on earth, no aversion for the characteristically heathen notion of the apotheosis of a mortal man, or no logic of philosophers was able to undermine popular belief in his genuine deity. Had Christians in the second century ever felt impelled to discard one of their two gods, they could have dispensed more easily with the Hebrew Creator than with their Savior Jesus Christ.

The could not do
what Cox does
so easily now!

Since neither Jesus nor Jehovah could be demoted from their popularly recognized status as deities, some less radical method of adjusting the relations between them had to be devised. The issue was no longer a controversy about mere names. Justin had made it clear that titles when used of the Deity indicated attributes rather than essentials of constitution. Employing a philosopher's dialectic, Justin declared[1] that the supreme God as creator of all things, but himself unbegotten, had no proper name, for to be assigned a name implies the prior existence of someone who bestows the name. Hence the terms "Father and God and Creator and Lord are not names but titles derived from his benefactions and deeds." Similarly, he who alone is properly called Son, "the Logos pre-existing with the Father and begotten before all created things," bears the name Christ to indicate that God anointed him and set in order the universe through his mediation. Thus the term "Christ" also has "an incomprehensible significance, just as the title 'God' is not a name but an opinion implanted in human nature to indicate a reality hard to explain." On the other hand, the name "Jesus" has reference to his career as man and savior. Henceforth the Christian godhead could not be described simply by the use of titles; now one must discuss natures, personalities, substances, essences, and metaphysical relationships, yet without sacrificing the values of a biblical tradition embodied in the increasingly powerful institution.

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[1] *Apol.* ii. 6.

CHAPTER EIGHT

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JESUS AND METAPHYSICS

When Constantine came into possession of the eastern half of the Roman Empire in the year 323, he was disturbed at finding the churches in a state of great agitation. Internal dissension threatened to disrupt the unity of the new religion that he had now adopted to safeguard the welfare of his kingdom. Lacking real insight into the nature of the difficulties, he sought to effect concord in a manner characteristic of the practical politician. He summoned at Nicea in A.D. 325 an assembly of Christian leaders representing rival opinions and asked that an agreement be reached. When, after tedious weeks of conference and debate, the vote for the final formulation of belief proved to be overwhelming, the Emperor readily assumed that the problem had been solved. He seemed to have had no realization of the forces there in conflict, or of the strength of character and purpose of those who constituted the minority. Later he was to learn that the trouble was too deep seated and had been too long brewing to be thus easily dismissed.

Without attempting to isolate every thread in the tangled skein of controversy, one may readily perceive the main drift of interests underlying the Nicene conflict regarding the proper way to define Jesus' place in the godhead.[1]

Perhaps the most striking external feature of the theological pronouncement made at Nicea was the omission of "Logos," notwithstanding the wide popularity of this terminology among earlier theologians. Even its presence in the Gospel of John, not to mention prominent Christian authors like Justin, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, and Origen, was insufficient to insure it a place among the remarkable phrases sanctioned by the Council. In the hands of a rigid logician the Logos imagery presented a twofold danger. It tended to make the pre-earthly Jesus only a "second" God subordinate to the aimighty creator and sustainer of the universe, and consequently it seemed to detract from the full godhead of the historic Jesus, the quality of whose incarnation conditioned the value of the sacraments and worship of the church. In other words, this interpretation gave Christianity two gods, the supreme Deity and his secondary helper, and believers were left dependent for their salvation upon the work of the subordinate divinity. The common man, as well as those ecclesiastics whose main concern was to claim the full ministrations of Almighty God for the institution which they served, had reason to fear the conclusion to which a consistent Logos Christology might lead. It menaced the perfection of the incarnation and proportionally diminished the efficacy of the Christian salvation.

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[1] The story of these doctrinal disputes may be read in the abundant literature on the subject, e.g. J. C. Ayer, *A Source Book for Ancient Church History* (New York, 1913); B. J. Kidd, *A History of the Church to A.D. 461* (Oxford, 1922); A. Harnack, *History of Dogma* (London, 1898); J. Tixeront, *History of Dogmas* (St. Louis, Mo., 1923); J. F. Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine* (4th ed.; London, 1929); A. E. Burn, *An Introduction to the Creeds* (London, 1899) and *The Council of Nicea* (London, 1925); H. M. Gwatkin, *Studies in Arianism* (Cambridge, 1882); H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ* (New York, 1914); A. E. J. Rawlinson (ed.), *Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation* (London, 1928); C. E. Raven, *Apollinarianism* (Cambridge, 1923); R. V. Sellers, *Eustathius of Antioch* (Cambridge, 1928); F. Loofs, *Leitfaden zum Studium der Dogmengeschichte*, 4. Aufl. (Halle, 1906); R. Seeberg, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, 3. Aufl. (Leipzig, 1917–23); A. d'Alès, *Le dogme de Nicée* (Paris, 1926); J. Lebreton, *Histoire du dogme de la trinité des origines au concile de Nicée* (Paris, 1928); F. J. Badcock, *The History of the Creeds* (London, 1930); J. K. Mozley, *The Beginnings of Christian Theology* (Cambridge, 1931).

When piety transcended logic in the interpretation of the Logos, the outcome was quite different. In his youth Athanasius, later the most conspicuous defender of Nicene orthodoxy, composed a notable treatise on the incarnation of the Logos. In this book the author manifests a keen concern for the effectiveness of the Logos as a mediator of salvation, but shows slight if any appreciation of such refinements of metaphyscal speculation as one meets, for example, in the writings of Origen. The pamphlet of Athanasius is not a philosopher's discussion of the possibility and technique of the incarnation; it is a believer's affirmation of how the godhead must be constituted in order to provide humanity an infallible salvation for both soul and body in the present and in the future. Only by seeing God and experiencing deification can man live secure from the demons in this world and be certain of resurrection to eternal blessedness in the hereafter: "The Logos of God became incarnate in order that we might be made divine, and he manifested himself in bodily form in order that we might acquire knowledge of the invisible Father."[1] The possibility of man's realizing this status of deification and enlightenment needed no philosophical justification; it was an accomplished fact in the experience of the church where the assurance was realized through participation in the sacred rites. If salvation was to be perfect, its mediator, the incarnate Logos, had to be the full embodiment of the godhead. Such was the pious conviction of the youthful Athanasius during the period of his tutelage under Alexander, bishop of Alexandria during the years A.D. 313–28.

While the Nicene decision dealt kindly with the type of sentiment represented by Alexander and Athanasius, it did violence to two other trends in

[1] Chap. liv.

the Christianity of the period, namely, the philosopher's desire to preserve the full transcendence of pure deity and the biblicist's appreciation of the human elements in the Jesus of gospel tradition. These were problems for the individual scholar's pursuit and were especially the concern of certain Eastern theologians; they never greatly agitated the Western church. Not even Constantine's chief adviser at Nicea, Hosius of Cordova, although he was the leading Western cleric of the day, seems to have appreciated the more individualistic point of view. True to the sentiment of Western Christendom, undoubtedly he found adequate religious satisfactions in the activities of the worshiping society and in its commonly accepted affirmations of belief. The worth of religion was judged by its moral and emotional effectiveness insured by membership in the valid institution. The saving revelation was fully available for the simplest soul irrespective of his mental accomplishments if he were properly attached to the redeemed group. As in the earlier days of the Christian movement, before it had been invaded by converts from the philosophical schools, an ancient tradition and an authentic ritual were far more important than any new discoveries in historical research or any philosophical exposition of dogma.

In the East, on the other hand, from the middle of the second century until the final disappearance of the Greek philosophical schools Christians often had in their midst aggressive intellectuals who made the quest for truth a personal affair subject to the laws of logic and the findings of research. Although they declared revelation to be the ultimate source of Christian wisdom, they felt obliged to seek a better understanding of revelation by making fresh discoveries of hidden meanings therein, or by extracting therefrom new truths logically deduced. This was a task for the individual investigator, who thus became an autonomous interpreter of Christian truth. He spoke as a scholar and not as an ecclesiastic, without realizing that the school he thus established might easily come into conflict with the church. But when a bishop spoke in the name of the divine institution and on behalf of a revered tradition, the odds were all in his favor, as against the individual Christian scholar and his most sincere convictions. By the very force of circumstances the dice were heavily loaded in favor of the Bishop of Alexandria and his party at the Council of Nicea.

Even a century before, in the works of Origen, the main lines of the future struggle had been foreshadowed. He too was a devout son of the church. He was highly appreciative of its power to transform conduct, to revolutionize character, and to bring peace to the soul; and no one was more ready than he to suffer martyrdom in loyalty to the faith.

Yet apparently he felt no serious pangs of conscience for having aroused the indignation of his bishop by such institutional irregularities as lay-preaching in the presence of his ecclesiastical superiors and the acceptance of ordination while on a visit to a neighboring diocese. The formalities of ecclesiasticism might rest lightly on his spirit, yet he confidently believed the church to be a divinely instituted means for bringing redemption to a lost world. Both the rites and the traditions of the church had unquestionable validity; Origen explicitly affirmed that nothing is to be accepted as truth "which deviates in any particular from ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition."[1]

At the same time Origen was whole-heartedly committed to a view of Christianity that not only allowed room for, but demanded as a higher virtue, individual intellectual effort in the apprehension and interpretation of saving truth. When enemies scornfully remarked that the new religion unhesitatingly accepted sinful and ignorant persons into its fellowship, Origen replied that Christianity had a twofold function: It invited for healing those who were sick in soul, and those who were in health it summoned to the knowledge and understanding of more divine things.[2] Thus for Origen the transformation of lost and sinful humanity into a redeemed and purified society, whose members had

[1] *De principiis*, Praef. 2.

[2] *Celsus* iii. 59.

formally acquired deification through participation in the sacraments, was not the final goal but only the beginning of the Christian's endeavor. The sacraments had to be supplemented by the discipline of education. Admission to the church restored health to the sick soul and thus prepared it to enter upon the higher quest for the fullest possible acquisition and comprehension of divine wisdom. Success depended upon the work of the student and scholar, who employed the tools of philosophical speculation and historical inquiry. And his findings were not to be reversed even by the imperious utterance of an established sacramental institution. Origen is uniformly conceded to have been the first thoroughgoing systematic theologian of Christendom; he is not so generally recognized as the one who in the treatment of religious questions did most to establish the point of view and method of procedure that caused greatest alarm in the next century to the more ecclesiastically minded bishops at Nicea.

The status of Jesus in the godhead and the significance of his earthly career were questions that occupied a large place in Origen's thinking. They were vital issues in the defense of a new religion that claimed supreme authority for its heroic founder in competition with a host of heathen rivals. Christianity was beginning to attract wider attention—as yet often embarrassingly unfavorable attention—within official and cultural circles when Origen zealously undertook his lifelong task of expounding Christian dogma and demonstrating its validity. His native talents and his education were such that he was easily at home among the intellectuals, and could meet on their own ground any philosophical critics who, like Celsus, ridiculed the idea of calling a crucified man "God" or of finding anything worthy of especial admiration in Jesus' earthly life.

Philosophical speculation and biblical interpretation are Origen's most trusted weapons of defense. In expounding his doctrine of Deity he takes the characteristic philosophical position of the Platonists. God is the perfect absolute and is so utterly transcendent that he is pure being; or, in fact, does not partake of "being" at all in the ordinary sense of the word. If being, or essence (*ousia*), is conceived of as something of which one partakes, like form or color, then "God does not partake of being; one should say that he is partaken of rather than that he partakes, and he is partaken of by those who have the Spirit of God."[1] He is pure intelligence, invisible, unique, immortal, imperturbable, imperishable. There is nothing material about him, in respect to either his constitution or his dwelling-place. To localize him in the heavens or to take literally the Old Testament stories of his appearance among men is absurd. It is true that Christians repeat from Scripture "Our Father who art in the heavens," but one entertains a very inferior notion who believes that God actually resides "in the heavens." This is equivalent to supposing that God himself exists in bodily form, whence follow "the impious dogmas of his divisibility, materiality, and perishability." On this point Origen is both emphatic and eloquent.[1]

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[1] *Ibid.* v. 64.

How can mankind secure the kindly assistance of the infinite and transcendent God? Since this Deity is believed to be the quintessence of goodness, his one legitimate emotion is the impulse toward self-revelation. But how can this revelation penetrate the veil separating the infinite and the incorporal realm of pure Deity from the finite and material world of men? In answering this question Origen parts company with the Platonic idealist and, like the earlier Christian apologists, draws upon the resources of Stoicism. The Logos is the intermediary needed to span the chasm between God and men. But Origen is able to go farther than his Christian predecessors had gone in equalizing God and the pre-existent Jesus. Not only was the Logos the only begotten Son of God, but the generation of the Son was itself an eternal process. There had never been a moment when he and God had not existed in this inseparable relation to each other. Thus Origen was more successful than previous theologians had been in establishing the equality of the Father and the Son on metaphysical grounds. Stated in the language of popular piety, one said that God is eternally Father and that the Son is eternally Son; there was never a time when the Son did not exist.

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[1] *Concerning Prayer* xxiii. 3.

Yet Origen does not so far debase philosophical thought in the interests of practical piety as to allow actual duality in the godhead, or to make the identification of the Father with the historical Jesus so realistic as to menace the full transcendence of the philosopher's ultimate God. It was only the outflowing activity of divine love and power that could enter the arena of material and human affairs; absolute Deity could not take on mortal flesh. The Logos may belong so uniquely to the being of God as to be of the "same essence" (*homoousia*) with the Almighty, the clear effulgence of his glory mentioned in Wisd. 7:24; but as a personal entity or substance (*hypostasis*) he is a separate being and quite subordinate to the Father, who is "God in and of himself" (*autotheos*). Beside him the Son is at best a "second" god, although fully entitled to a dignity inferior only to that of the Almighty.

Metaphysics could go no farther in its attempt to unite the supreme Deity and the Christ of the church in one consistent definition of the godhead.

In the interests of ritual and tradition councils might affirm a closer unity, but only at the expense of logical precision in thinking. Or one might allege that the philosopher's failure to identify his transcendent deity with the "second" God, who represented him in his dealings with matter, led to rank polytheism—one still believed in at least two gods! This might seem like a crushing charge to lay against a Christian, but perhaps the heretic, when keeping Christ nearer to the human level, was quite as loyal to ancient tradition as were his opponents who anathematized minorities in the name of the "Catholic church."

It was no easy task to make even a "second god" serve genuinely in the capacity of a historical Jesus, the story of whose life as recorded in the gospels was now the subject of study in the Christian schools and was known also to such opponents of Christianity as Celsus in the second century and Porphyry in the third. In attempting to refute Celsus it became necessary to treat certain questions about the earthly Jesus that were in reality of no vital concern to Origen. While he was keenly interested in expounding the gospels, and discoursed extensively on their contents, his dominating motives were dogmatic rather than historical, and his skill in the use of allegory always enabled him to find scriptural support for the convictions at which he had already arrived as a theologian.

cf Casin [illegible]

Hence in Jesus he saw the incarnation of a divine being rather than the deification of a hero, and all questions regarding his deity had to be referred to metaphysics rather than to history. The theologian's problem was to show how the god became a man, while for the historian the given datum was the man Jesus, and the interpreter had to explain how he became a god.

At this time no loyal churchman would have questioned for a moment the full humanity of Jesus, but the pressure of criticism from without required that more and more stress be laid on his earthly display of divine glory and power. The most troublesome of Celsus' objections was his charge that the Jesus whom the gospels portray is not sufficiently grand and dazzling to inspire or justify belief in his deity. Origen struggled heroically to prove that exactly the opposite is true; the whole gospel story is a continuous exhibition of an incarnate deity's marvelous doings. In defending the tradition of the church Origen's loyalty to belief in the deity of Jesus knew no bounds, but as a philosopher he introduced definitions and explanations required by his metaphysics yet essentially so discordant with popular belief that even his recognized intellectual supremacy could not save him from the suspicion of heresy in later times.

When thinking with philosophical precision, Origen could not make the Logos fully equal to absolute Deity; and, similarly, the incarnate Logos fell considerably short of complete identification with humanity. The historical Jesus of Nazareth had to be a compound of deity and humanity, truly god and truly man, but he was not necessarily both in equal measure at every moment and under all circumstances. Celsus ridiculed the idea that an incarnated deity should experience the agonies of Gethsemane or cry out in distress on the cross. Origen conceded the point and affirmed that the Logos who had declared himself to be the resurrection and the life could not partake of such experiences; how absurd to say "the life died" or "the resurrection died!" The very language was self-contradictory. It was the man Jesus and not the divine Logos that had died, and any philosophically exact definition of the relation between the divine and the human in the historical person had by logical necessity to keep the two entities distinct in thought.

For a hundred years this had been dangerous ground on which to tread, but Origen was forced by circumstances to propose a solution for the old problem. Had he been left entirely to his own inclinations he might never have framed a doctrine of incarnation; he had as little need as the apostle Paul for a Christ "after the flesh." But once faced by the demand for a statement, he proceeded with characteristic originality to formulate a dogma.

Starting with the Platonic doctrine of the soul's pre-existence, and assuming that living human beings are composed of body, soul, and spirit, Origen was able to picture a unique metaphysical procedure. Jesus as the son of Mary was a being of mortal flesh inhabited by a particularly pure human soul in whom the divine Logos dwelt as spirit. This composite being was as truly a single personality as is any man, with his ordinary body, soul, and spirit. Thus when Jesus exclaimed "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death," this agony proceeds from his soul, not from his spirit—from the human part, not from the divine.

Origen found much practical worth in this type of thinking. Both the flesh and the soul of the incarnate Logos were of a superior quality, yet they were genuinely human, and thus one could see in the career of Jesus an example of the way in which the divine Logos can enlighten its human habitation. No unimportant part of the service performed by the Logos was educational. It was proper to say even of Jesus, although from the moment of birth the child had been the "God-man," that he grew in wisdom and maturity of soul. Thus Origen interpreted Luke 2:52.[1] Yet so inseparably were the Logos spirit, the pre-existent soul, and the physical body united in Jesus that there was never for Origen any problem of a divided personality. The didactic function of the Logos was as essential a part of the unified life as is the operation of the human spirit in the ordinary individual.

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[1] *In Lucam*, Hom. xx (Rauer ed., pp. 134 f.).

The Logos Christ, who assumed human form in Jesus of Nazareth, has always been and ever remains the great enlightening force in the experience of mankind. He was the source of all prophetic inspiration among the Old Testament worthies. During his sojourn on earth his chief mission was also educational—the enlightenment of all human souls. Both by example and precept Jesus showed himself to be the supreme teacher. Yet it is not the Sermon on the Mount, but the Gospel of John, in which Origen finds the message of Jesus most adequately presented. This book is the noblest of all the Holy Scriptures, for herein one hears most clearly the voice of the incarnate Son of God giving utterance to the highest type of revealable wisdom.[1] In this rôle Jesus ministers primarily to the needs of intellectual persons. The simple faith of the uneducated, who trust in the death of Christ and the efficacy of the sacraments, is good in its place, but more enlightened souls press on to an understanding of the real "mysteries" of the Christian religion. And the Johannine Christ, declaring himself to be the light to illumine the world, the good shepherd who knows and is apprehended by his own, the heavenly vine whose wine intoxicates disciples with comprehension of the ideal, the one who sheds his blood to save the world but whose spoken word is the true source of life for the human spirit—this is the divine mystagogue who leads the man of understanding into the deepest secrets of heavenly wisdom and the fullest realization of Christian salvation. As Moses was the lawgiver of the Hebrews so Jesus Christ was "the author of the saving dogmas taught by Christianity."[1] Thus, Jesus, like Origen, aimed to effect salvation by propounding a dogmatic theology.

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[1] *In evangelium Ioannis* vi. 2.

It would be easy to misrepresent Origen in this connection if one failed to recall his strong attachment to the church, with its traditions and rites, and his leaning toward an intellectual type of mysticism by which the believer reproduced in his own experience the same sort of communion with the divine that had been perfected in the person of Jesus. The true disciple continued to attain the experience of divinization as he advanced in the apprehension of divine knowledge. Such persons were always to be found in the church, yet comparatively few rose to this height. But for those who did, a peculiarly high appreciation of Jesus was possible. In a new sense they were able to call him their very own, for they alone could appreciate the new wisdom he revealed and experienced that union with Deity which he exemplified and through his incarnation made available for mankind. Accordingly, Origen can display much warmth of feeling in the use of phrases like "my Lord Jesus," "my Savior," or "my High-Priest." In such moods he might be called the first Christian Neoplatonist, although it is distinctly a "Christ-mysticism" rather than a "God-mysticism" that one meets in Origen.

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[1] *De principiis* iv. 1. 1.

Perhaps it is mainly because of his mystical leanings, and his readiness to allegorize Scripture, that Origen never came to real grips with his historical problem. He never brought himself to the point of seeking first to discover the historical phenomenon, Jesus of Nazareth, before proceeding to show how belief in his deification could be defended, or how one could accept him as the incarnation of Deity. The latter question had become the crucial one for a Christian apologist in the third century, and Origen solves it by simply ignoring, because he fails to perceive, the numerous gospel details requiring more adequate explanation. The fact that Celsus magnified the difficulties often drove Origen to the opposite extreme and thus led him to miss the real issue. Sometimes he seems to realize that, philosopher though he is, he has not been altogether successful in reconciling his metaphysics with his biblical exegesis. In the lowly career of Jesus there is a remainder left unexplained by the dogma of the incarnation. If Rufinus, his Latin translator, reports Origen correctly, the latter sensed his inability to show how the very Logos and Wisdom of the supreme God could be identified with the historical figure of the lowly Jesus. But, good churchman that he is, Origen will not discredit the dogma; rather, the mental processes of the philosopher are at fault. He has attempted to unveil an insoluble mystery (*sacramentum*) that was too intricate for the rational powers of the holy apostles, or perhaps indeed it was beyond the abilities of the entire celestial host.[1] For an unregenerate philosopher the improbable was the unbelievable, but for a Christian scholar and churchman the limitations of philosophy were transcended by tradition and faith; "mystery" virtually belonged in a category higher than knowledge, since even the known and knowable were essentially mysteries revealed in the Scriptures and in the experiences sponsored by the authentic institution.

Successors of Origen pried into the mystery of the godhead afresh, particularly on the side of its historical and biblical attestations. Shortly after Origen's death Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch, created a stir by putting forth an interpretation of Jesus based on the plain meaning of New Testament texts, representing him as originally a man who lived so agreeably to the will of God that

[1] *Ibid.* ii. 6. 2.

he was endowed with power to work miracles while on earth and after death was rewarded with resurrection and exaltation to heaven. As for the philosophical problem, Paul was also a firm believer in the existence of only one supreme God. But the popular Logos teaching he rejected as essentially a belief in two gods. The term was not to be used of a distinct person, but only to indicate an aspect of divine energy that inspired the prophets and resided to an unusual degree in the historical Jesus—it dwelt "in Christ as in a temple." Mary's son had been "a man like us, though in every way better" since he enjoyed the special favor of the Holy Spirit and was attested by prophecy and the Scriptures.[1] Thus Jesus was essentially a divinely endowed man rather than an incarnate God, and it is not surprising that Paul's views encountered sharp opposition from other Christian leaders who sensed the menace involved in trusting for salvation to a savior who was not absolutely God.

Although excommunicated in the year 269 by a gathering of seventy bishops, Paul still remained in possession of the church while Antioch continued subject to the queen of Palmyra, under whom Paul held the office of *procurator ducenarius*. But when Emperor Aurelian took over the city in the year

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[1] The best recent work on this subject is F. Loofs, *Paulus von Samosata* (Leipzig, 1924). The fragmentary texts are printed on pp. 324-39.

272 he ordered the church property to be given up to "those whom the overseers [bishops] of the religion [dogma] in Italy and the city of Rome should approve."[1] This was a fatal moment. Henceforth problems of Christian doctrine and practice were frequently to suffer embarrassment in the effort to satisfy a triad of interests. Philosophical theories became matters of increasing importance as Christians gradually took over the cultural guardianship of imperial society. The growing ecclesiasticism of Christianity was ever on the watch to conserve its corporate and traditional integrity. And with the rise of the church to a place of greater importance in the eyes of the rulers of the state, secular interests were thrown into the already quivering balances.

Toward the close of the third century Antioch's fame as a center of Christian learning was greatly enhanced by the school of Lucian. It is unfortunate that so little is known about the career and opinions of this teacher. But his influence was remarkable and widespread in the East at the time of the Council of Nicea. Like his fellow-countrymen, Paul of Samosata, Lucian seems to have been fundamentally a biblicist in his approach to the problem of Jesus' personality. It has commonly been assumed that he was influenced by the views of Paul, although this opinion has recently been vigorously denied.[1] Apparently he was also a devotee of the Greek philosophical type of thought represented by Origen, who had maintained the absolute unity, indivisibility, and incomprehensibility of ultimate Deity. Hence Jesus could not have been God in the absolute sense of the term, but at best only a kind of "second god" such as Origen had discovered in the person of the incarnate Logos. Yet we have no evidence that Lucian fell into disrepute with the ecclesiastical authorities, and he was crowned with the glory of martyrdom during the persecution of Licinius in the year 311.

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[1] Eusebius *History* vii. 30. 19.

It was upon Lucian's pupils that the storm of disapproval finally broke. How far they correctly represented his teachings need not concern us in this connection. Regarding their own views, and the importance of their opinions in determining the trend of ecclesiastical orthodoxy with respect to the constitution of the godhead, we are fairly well informed. At the time of the Nicene Council several of them held important bishoprics and were generally recognized as the most learned and influential clerics in Eastern Christendom. As painted by their enemies, they are said to have been arrogant and self-willed, proud of their alleged intellectual superiority, scornful of the less well-educated leaders, and belligerently insistent that they alone were in possession of genuine truth never before revealed to mankind. Also they seem to have cherished a very strong partisan spirit, priding themselves on their right to the designation of "fellow-Lucianists." Exaggerated as this representation well may be, it can hardly be utterly without foundation. Undoubtedly they were entirely sincere in their feeling that the rank and file of the Christian leaders in their day fell far below the standards of intelligence to which educated men of the Greek world might properly aspire, and now that Christianity was drawing into its ranks larger and larger numbers of cultured people, it seemed fitting that leaders of the church should give more attention to logical consistency of thinking and accurate exegesis of Scripture.

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[1] Especially by Loofs, *Paulus von Samosata*, pp. 180 ff.

One of Lucian's pupils became overzealous in advocating rigid logic as applied to religious opinions. This was Arius, priest of Baucalis, the oldest of the seven parishes in Alexandria. He was a man mature in years but youthful in spirit, whom his enemies accused of cherishing ecclesiastical ambitions. However that may be, certainly he was, according to his lights, devoutly loyal to the cause of truth and honesty in Christian thinking. Even his opponents bear witness to his cultured speech and charming manner, as well as to his strict piety and service to the common people. By house-to-house visitation he carried his message to every home in his parish, won over to his views several

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members of the clergy in the neighboring regions including even bishops, and endured excommunication and exile rather than surrender his allegiance to that which he believed to be the truth.

While Arius and his sympathizers in Egypt were suffering hardships in consequence of the antagonism of Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, Arius wrote a letter to his friend Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, declaring a willingness to stand by his convictions at any cost. Alexander, says Arius,

> has driven us out of the city as atheists because we do not give assent to his public utterance, "always God, always Son; at the same time Father, at the same time Son; as one unbegotten the Son co-exists with God; he is always begotten, begotten from the unbegotten; neither in thought nor in a single moment of time does God come before the Son; always God, always Son; the Son is of God himself." . . . . But what do we say and think, what have we taught and what do we still teach? That the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any way a part of the unbegotten, nor of any ultimate substance, but that he by the will and counsel [of God] came into being as perfect God, only-begotten and unchangeable, and that before he was begotten or created or purposed or established, he did not exist; for he was not unbegotten. We are persecuted because we say "the Son has a beginning but God is without beginning." On this account we are persecuted, also because we say that he is of that which did not previously exist. And we express ourselves

thus because he is neither a part of God nor of any ultimate substance. On this account we are persecuted; the rest you know.[1]

Today one may feel some difficulty in taking seriously the phrases of Arius. The whole controversy may seem to be a futile battle of words. But in the early part of the fourth century around the eastern end of the Mediterranean many persons felt that these issues involved not only the validity of individual human opinions but the welfare of all mankind both now and hereafter. The Christian movement had become so important a part of the total social and cultural life that the question of defining Jesus' position in the godhead was virtually a world-issue.

Three currents in the life of the times converged in the Council of Nicea. To the great mass of the less well-educated membership of the church, and to those leaders who were especially concerned to preserve the sacramental values of the ecclesiastical rites, it seemed absolutely necessary to maintain the full equality of Jesus with God and to guard against any definition of his person, whether based on biblical exegesis or metaphysical considerations, that might impair his saving sufficiency. To the philosophically inclined leaders, represented conspicuously by the Lucianists, sacramentalism was

this was not their motive.

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[1] Theodoret *Church History* i. 5. 1–4 (Parmentier ed., pp. 25 f.).

less important than the moral holiness of Jesus displayed in his life on earth and the rewards that came to him and were available for his followers who became enlightened through discipleship to him. He was the revealer of God, not the incarnation of the Absolute. In the thinking of the Christian philosopher, a God who could take on human flesh was not sufficiently grand and infinite to support and preside over the destinies of the cosmos. The third force in the social milieu was the concern of the political authorities. In the Christian sense of the term this influence could hardly be called strictly religious, yet from the point of view of a Roman emperor who believed the safety of the state to depend upon the favor of heaven it was exceedingly important that the religious activities of his subjects should be conducted in an orderly and harmonious manner. And for Christians themselves the memory of persecution by the state was still too vivid, and the appreciation of imperial favor too highly prized, to permit either party in a theological controversy to ignore the wishes of Constantine. It was inevitable that both state and church should now be involved in the attempted settlement of the Christological debate.

Such was the setting in which Jesus' position in the godhead was ultimately defined at the Council of Nicea. No single form of earlier opinion could survive in its original purity. If any effective compromise was to be reached, agglutinations and adulterations of ideas and phrases were inevitable. Only Arius and a few of his supporters remained firm to the bitter end and accepted unflinchingly the anathema pronounced against them. As for the others, the final statement of belief was so elastic—or ambiguous—and the variety of terms so abundant that each person could justify a formal assent by fixing attention on certain approved phrases, or reading into others an agreeable meaning. No other procedure was possible in determining the content of any creed on which people of varying interests and diverse heritages were required to agree. Hence the conglomerate character of the Nicene affirmation that Christians believe:

> In one God, Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible;
>
> And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only-begotten, who is of the essence [*ousia*] of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of the same essence [*homoousion*] with the Father; through him [the Son] all things came into existence, both things in heaven and things on earth; on account of us men and our salvation he descended, became incarnate, and was made man, suffering and rising on the third day, and ascended into the heavens, and is coming to judge the living and the dead;
>
> And in the Holy Spirit.

But those who say that there was a time when he [the Son] did not exist, and that before being begotten he did not exist, and that he came into existence from things non-existent, or those who allege that the Son of God is of a different substance [*hypostasis*] or essence [*ousia*], capable of change or alteration, these the catholic church anathematizes.

The Nicene pronouncement was a remarkable blend of two logically irreconcilable ways of thinking that had been crystallizing within Christendom for nearly two hundred years. On the one hand, it embodied speculative interests that had emerged prominently within the church in consequence of its Greek acquisitions received from converted intellectuals who had approached the problem of the Christian godhead from the side of philosophy. On the other hand, it aimed to conserve a picturesque (mythical) and sacramental type of interest nourished by the church as an agency for the mediation of a salvation to be attained through attachment to a traditional hero. His benefactions could be appropriated only by participation in the ceremonies of this divinely established institution now conscious of new responsibility and power as a triumphant religion in the Roman state. The philosopher was compelled to abandon his rigid insistence on the logic of transcendental monotheism, but he was allowed the free use of metaphysical imagery.

The biblicist's interest suffered most. The period of gospel history between the incarnation and the crucifixion was virtually expunged; the earthly Jesus was completely overshadowed by the metaphysical Son of God.

Not more so than in St Paul. – not "after the flesh".

CHAPTER NINE

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THE JESUS OF CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

THE action of the Council of Nicea had made possible in a new sense the existence of a Catholic theology. While one or another of the rival groups within Christianity had long ago contended that it entertained the type of faith or followed the practice that ought to be in vogue everywhere, as representing the orthodox Catholic church, no administrative machinery had previously been available for enforcing throughout the entire Roman world the opinions or customs of any one section of Christendom. But with Constantine's adoption of Christianity as the most favored religion in the state, and with Theodosius' drastic legislation against both pagan cults and minor Christian groups in the latter part of the fourth century, the "true and Nicene faith"[1] became a definitive entity. When the empire was controlled by one ruler a single Catholicism was possible, while in a divided empire there could be two branches of the true church, the Greek and the Roman. The relation between the two might be entirely harmonious or exceedingly strained, according to circumstances, but neither branch doubted the validity of its position.

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[1] *Theodosian Code* xvi. 1. 3.

A standardized orthodox opinion about Jesus was now possible as never before. The Nicene statement, reaffirmed and expanded at subsequent general councils—especially at Constantinople in 381, at Ephesus in 431, and at Chalcedon in 451[1]—enjoyed a prestige quite equal if not superior to that of the Sacred Scriptures. Denial of scriptural authority was, of course, unthinkable for the makers of the creeds, yet they believed it a justifiable and necessary duty to reinterpret the gospel record, or ignore its phraseology and adopt so doubtful and unbiblical a term as "same essence" (*homoousion*), to meet the desires of Constantine and his Spanish adviser, Hosius. A new voice of authority was needed to express the mind of an institution that sought to conserve ancient tradition, to satisfy speculative demands, and to please the imperial ruler. The emotions of the uneducated populace, the interests of the learned, and the welfare of the state were now inextricably involved in the formulation of the creed of the church.

Dr.'s "Interests"
[illegible] Chicago
Theo. Seminary

Emphatic protests against this new self-constituted authority were also inevitable. The friends of Arius were not idle, and they quickly learned the advantage to be derived from less attention to logic and a greater aptitude for politics. Even under Constantine their Christianity became "orthodox" and that of their opponents "heretical," when by imperial order the ban was lifted from Arius, probably in the year 330, and six years later imposed upon his chief opponent, Athanasius, who was sent into exile at Treves in Gaul. The bitter conflicts of the years that followed, until a quarter of a century later when the Athanasians finally attained permanent supremacy at court, constitute a sad story that no longer needs to be recounted. But throughout the course of the strife the notion of official catholicity was not abandoned; it was only a question of which of the rivals was to receive the backing of emperors and bishops. The principle of conciliar authority remained in force.

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[1] For an introduction to the extensive literature on the creeds and councils see S. J. Case (and Others), *Bibliographical Guide to the History of Christianity* (Chicago, 1931), items 193–95, 266–69.

Can't [illegible] credit [illegible] with honesty & fidelity to Christ & [illegible] of the truth?

The canonical character of the Nicene Council was expressed most emphatically by Athanasius in the year 369. In his eyes its decision had voiced an opinion of the whole church and therefore had been an expression of the divine will. It had set forth "the orthodox faith delivered by Christ, preached by the apostles, and handed down by the fathers." To its decrees "the whole world has long ago agreed and at the present time when many councils convene . . . . they all assent to it." Athanasius knew that there were many individuals who refused assent, but in his opinion these were persons who neglected to fear God when he says "remove not the ancient landmark which the fathers fixed" (Prov. 22:28) and "he who speaks ill of his father or mother shall be put to death" (Exod. 21:17). These recalcitrants do not perceive that "every plant which the Heavenly Father has not planted shall be torn out by the roots" (Matt. 15:13) and that "the word of the Lord which came to pass through the world-council at Nicea remains forever."[1] Thus for Athanasius and his numerous followers the decision of the fathers at Nicea had the full validity of a new Scripture.

Notwithstanding the prestige of the Council of Nicea, unity of opinion among Eastern theologians proved impossible of attainment. This was especially true in respect to their interpretations of Jesus. With the accession of Theodosius, Arianism lost its political support and the orthodoxy of Nicea became firmly established, but even when reaffirmed by successive councils it still left unsolved new problems that the inquisitive mind of Oriental theologians refused to let alone. Even though it was no longer permissible to doubt the coeternity of the Father and the Son in their pre-earthly status, one might still inquire into the relation of the divine and the human in the person of the earthly Jesus. And the more emphatically one stressed the perfect deity of the pre-existent Christ, the more difficult became the question of the true nature of the incarnation.

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[1] *Ad Afros* 1 f. (Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. XXVI, cols. 1029 and 1032).

The Arians had delighted to portray the qualities of humility and lowliness in the career of the earthly Jesus. In the gospels they found ample warrant for this picture, which served also to justify them in arguing with their opponents that the Son was to be clearly differentiated from the Father. But if the opinions of the Arians were to be rejected, then how could one explain the character of the incarnation so as to justify the opposite view? It is not surprising, therefore, to find theologians in the East who busied themselves persistently with the problem. How could the Deity inhabit human flesh, be truly a man like other men, and share in the weaknesses and impulses of fleshly matter? If the unity of the godhead had to be always and everywhere maintained, in accordance with the decision of Nicea, must not one allow for a duality in the earthly manifestation of the Son? Surely it could not be supposed that God and man could be embraced in one historical person where the qualities and powers of both were fully present.

The issue now was not so much a problem in metaphysics as one in psychology. The ancient philosophers had made of man a trichotomous being, consisting of body, soul, and mind; and if Christ had been a true man, he must have been possessed of these three constituent elements. In a similar way the Apostle Paul had employed the threefold representation of flesh, soul, and spirit, the last of the three spheres being the realm in which the divine and the human had come together in the constitution of the Christian. But the Christian theologians of the fourth century were more inclined to use Aristotelian terminology and speak of body, soul, and mind. Body was the fleshly element common to all mankind, soul was the life-principle which man shared in common with all other living creatures, while it was in mind that his superiority resided. In ordinary men this was essentially the reasoning faculty, the organ of intellectual life. It might be granted that the Son, in taking on humanity, had assumed a body of real flesh in which dwelt a genuine human soul, but in place of the human mind, with its limitations and finiteness, an incarnate deity would surely possess the divine mind.

The most conspicuous exponent of this type of opinion, Apollinarius (Apollinaris) of Laodicea, was himself a scholarly Christian, trained in the learning of the Greeks, who sought to defend Nicene orthodoxy even in the face of strong imperial opposition at a time when Arianism was supported by imperial authority, and who ill deserved the condemnation as a heretic that later befell him. But, like other learned Christians of his day, he failed to gauge properly the strength of popular ecclesiastical interests and the importance attaching to the doctrine of the complete and perfect humanity of Jesus as surety for the full divinization of a believer who trusted for salvation in the sacraments of the church. Its tradition required that the Redeemer should be a true man, complete in his human nature, but differing from other men only in his freedom from sin. In applying Greek logic to the person of the earthly Jesus, Apollinarius had not allowed him to assume full humanity, and, accordingly, this teaching seemed to diminish Jesus' efficacy as a savior of men. If the god who redeemed had not been himself fully human, those who trusted in him for salvation could not be made completely divine.

The baffling and logically insoluble problem was settled again by a conciliar decision, when Apollinarius was condemned at Constantinople in the year 381. Jesus had to embody in his person while on earth two natures, a divine and a human equally complete, just as he had in his pre-earthly career to be the equal in both time and constitution to the absolute Deity. If this postulate seemed incapable of being understood by human reason, then it was to be accepted as an inscrutable divine mystery. But it had to be true, since it was necessary for the efficacy of the ecclesiastical rites. There were powerful and cultured leaders in the church, like

Basil and the two Gregories, who stood ready to champion both the Nicene and the Constantinopolitan orthodoxy in the battle against anyone who would deny either the full equality of the Son with the Father in the godhead or the full equality of Jesus with humanity in his manhood. That which had been born of Mary was perfect man, but at the same time she was mother of God (θεοτόκος).

Yet the troublesome issue would not down. Particularly in the East, where individual freedom of judgment and intellectual curiosity could not be successfully suppressed by conciliar decree, the discussion continued to be vigorously pursued. One group of theologians, who perpetuated the line of interest begun by Lucian of Antioch and who stressed the study of gospel history, was prone to emphasize the humanity of Jesus, although without in the least meaning to doubt the genuineness of the incarnation. These thinkers were offended by the popular disposition to worship the "Mother of God," and held that Mary's son was a genuine man in whom the divine Logos had taken up its abode. So prominent a person as Nestorius,[1] who became patriarch of Constantinople in A.D. 428, sponsored this type of opinion. Even though he believed himself to be in agreement with the Nicene and Constantinopolitan decisions, he was ultimately destined to fall under a conciliar condemnation at Ephesus in A.D. 431. Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, and Celestine, bishop of Rome, were opponents too powerful to be resisted even by the patriarch of Constantinople. Under their domination the Council "very sorrowfully" and "with many tears" pronounced against Nestorius this sentence: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he has blasphemed, decrees through the present most holy synod that Nestorius be excluded from the episcopal dignity and from all priestly commission." But his followers were so numerous that the movement could not be successfully crushed. It became a separate Christian church, or "denomination" as we should say, with its center at Edessa in Syria.

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[1] See F. Loofs, *Nestorius and His Place in the History of Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge, 1914).

The East was always given to extremes. It soon became apparent that those who were interested in opposing Nestorianism were pushing the argument in favor of the divine nature of the earthly Jesus to such a degree that they laid themselves open to heretical charges on the ground of seeming to deny his true humanity. He had only one nature, that was the divine. This controversy raged in the East, one party dominating in Palestine and Egypt, while its opponents were in the ascendancy in Syria and Asia. The situation had become so critical by the middle of the fifth century that another world-council was necessary. Convened by imperial authority at Chalcedon in A.D. 451, it heard with high acclaim a letter to Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople, that had been written two years earlier by Leo, the now influential bishop of Rome, whose words were received as an utterance of Peter the apostle. Among other things Leo wrote:

> It was the Holy Spirit who gave fecundity to the Virgin, but it was from a body that a real body was derived. . . . . Accordingly, while the distinctness of both natures and substances was preserved, and both met in one person, lowliness was assumed by majesty, weakness by power, mortality by eternity. And, in order to pay the debt of our condition, the inviolable nature was united to the passible, so that as the appropriate remedy for our ills one and the same mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, might from one element be capable of dying and also from the other be incapable. Therefore in the entire and perfect nature of very man was born very God, whole in what was his, whole in what was ours. . . . . The Catholic church lives and goes forward by this faith that in Christ Jesus there is neither humanity without true divinity nor divinity without true humanity.[1]

As the Nicene Council had settled the dispute about Jesus' position in the godhead by an official affirmation rather than by logic, so the Chalcedonian Council delivered an authoritative statement regarding the incarnation. The only practicable way out of the difficulty was to assert for Jesus both full deity and full humanity during the period of his career on earth. Not that this affirmation would actually solve the question at issue, but if enforced it would prevent further controversial disruption of the Christian society. This was in reality the fundamental concern, whether or not it was thus consciously perceived. The leaders who had the welfare of the institution at heart desired to avoid division and to establish equilibrium. This, as they accurately sensed, could be accomplished only by including in their official statements the position of both parties as representing two sides of one comprehensive truth. This composite declaration was not, however, to be defended by logical analysis or any specific set of scriptural texts. In fact, any humanly demonstrable proof of the creed's validity might be entirely out of the question. If it remained a mystery to man's mind it was none the less a valid belief, once it had been put forth by the decree of an official council.

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[1] *Tome* 2 f., 5 (text in T. H. Bindley, *The Oecumenical Documents of the Faith* [London, 1899], pp. 195 ff.).

The fiat of the Council of Chalcedon was explicit and forceful:

> Following the holy Fathers with one voice we teach all men to confess the Son and our Lord Jesus Christ to be one and the same, that he is perfect in godhead and

perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, of a rational soul and body, of the same essence with the Father according to his godhead and of the same essence with us according to his manhood, in all respects like us, apart from sin; begotten of the Father before all ages according to the godhead, and in these last days for us and for our salvation born of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, according to his manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten One; of two natures inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinctions of nature being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved and concurring in one person and one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, the only-begotten, God the Logos, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from of old have taught concerning him, and as the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the creed of the Fathers has handed down to us.

The Chalcedonian legislation was canonized on the spot. It was declared to be in accord with the teachings of the prophets, with the message of Jesus Christ, and with the former decisions of the Fathers. The fact that it dealt with a new theme did not cause the legislators any anxiety or doubt. To any observer of the situation it was clearly apparent that Christendom, particularly in the East, was being rent asunder by disputes regarding the manner of the incarnation. The constitution of the earthly Jesus needed to be authoritatively defined. This task could be effectively performed only by a council, and that being the conviction of the assembly, it was entirely appropriate to their psychology that they should declare.:

> These things therefore having been expressed by us with the greatest accuracy and attention, the holy ecumenical synod defines that no one shall be permitted to bring forward a different faith, nor to write, nor to put together, not to excogitate, nor to teach it to others. But such as dare either to put together another faith, or to bring forward or to teach or to deliver a different creed to such as wish to be converted from among the Gentiles to a knowledge of the truth, or from the Jews, or from any heresy whatever, if they be bishops or clerics let them be deposed, the bishops from the episcopate and the clerics from the clergy; but if they be monks or members of the laity, let them be anathematized. . . . . This is the faith of the Fathers. . . . . This is the faith of the Apostles.[1]

The "single-nature" (Monophysite) party, like the Nestorians condemned at the Council of Ephesus, was too powerful to be crushed even by the decree of a world-council. It remained as a separate branch of Christianity, playing an important rôle in the East. Henceforth Catholic orthodoxy among the Greeks represented only one section of Christendom, and not always the most influential. But although Christological debates continued to be agitated with vigor, the points in dispute need not concern us at present. The main problems had now been canvassed. At Nicea the lowly Jesus of Nazareth, long since transported to heaven in the faith of his followers, was made equal in every respect with absolute Deity. In the meantime he had in a measure returned to earth, and at the Chalcedonian Council he was officially declared to be the full equal of mankind and to partake completely of the nature of humanity. But as a man he was so far removed from ordinary mortals, and so fully God even in his earthly manifestation, that relatively little attention was given to a quest for accurate historical knowledge of his earthly career. He appeared on earth trailing blinding clouds of glory from above, and there was but slight if any disposition to view him in realistic human fashion. Christians read the gospels that they might become more convinced of the presence of divinity in humanity, not that they might become better acquainted with a real human being working out his own salvation with fear and trembling in terms of sincerities, consecrations, devotions, and spiritual quests, such as his disciples might well emulate in their own religious living.

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[1] *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (2d ser.), xiv, 265.

Why not in fact?

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When these theologians did concern themselves constructively with the career of the earthly Jesus, they dwelt with surprising brevity upon those incidents in his life that disclosed his human struggles and aspirations, and favored those portions of the gospel narrative that seemed to manifest his divine character. One is struck by the fact that Eusebius, in writing his history of Christianity from the beginning down to his own day, made such slight use of the gospel materials, even though he could assume that these documents were well known to his readers. On the contrary, he was interested only in what seemed to have evidential value for Christology rather than narratives that would exhibit in detail the story of the human Jesus. Jesus' fulfilment of prophecy, his miracles, the punishments that fell on Herod for his vain attempt to slaughter the child Jesus, the apocryphal Abgar-legend, the pre-existence and divinity of the Savior—these are the items that caught the eye of the "Father of Church History." The same interest pervades his *Proof of the Gospel.* It is very true that this was designedly an apologetic work. But even in the chapter in which the apologist dealt with the teaching of Jesus the main concern was to show that the Nazarene propounded "holy, useful, philosophic and virtuous doctrines." These were presented "as if Jesus possessed only ordinary human nature," but Eusebius hastened on to examine the diviner side of the teaching, which for him was certainly its more important aspect. He dwelt more fondly upon the numerous marvelous works performed by Jesus, "how he cleansed by his divine power those leprous bodies, how he drove demons out of men by his word of command, and how again he cured ungrudgingly those who were sick and laboring under all kinds of infirmities."[1]

Similarly in the *Oration of Constantine*, which belongs to this same period and setting, there is a remarkable chapter[2] on the teaching and works of the Savior, and the benefits conferred by him in his career. As Son of God he invited mankind to the practice of virtue and inculcated saving precepts. He came to earth to confer blessings on the human race and assembled about him the best men of that day, to whom he committed a body of instruction rich in suggestions for those who wished to pursue a virtuous life. But his greatest favor was his demonstration of miraculous power displayed in his visits to the sick, his healing of bodily afflictions, and his communication of divine truth. He was a messenger to those who were lowly and poor, he inculcated humility and poverty among his disciples, teaching them to endure justice rather than to inflict injury or take vengeance. But these virtues are somewhat dimmed by the speaker's admission that Jesus could conduct himself thus because he was conscious of possessing a divine power that would deliver one from all evils "by his simple nod." Furthermore, the orator affirms:

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[1] *Proof of the Gospel*, trans. W. J. Ferrar (London, 1920), chap. iv.

[2] i. 15.

> This is, I believe, the sure basis of faith, the true foundation of confidence, that we find such miracles as these performed and perfected at the command of the God of Providence. . . . . While intent on providing for the blessing of mankind, so grievously insulted by the malice of the ungodly, yet he passed unharmed through the sufferings of his passion and gained a mighty conquest, an everlasting crown of triumph over all iniquity.

In Leo's *Tome* the need for proving the human nature of Christ might seem to have offered an excellent opportunity for the Bishop of Rome to call attention to the realistic human elements in the career of Jesus. The writer was not unaware of his privilege nor did he fail utterly to rise to the occasion. But here again the concern is mainly with the lowly side of Jesus' career as a foil against which to set off to greater advantage the divine display made by him. When Jesus submitted to injuries it was only in order that the brilliancy of his miracles might shine all the brighter. His humility in the cradle was balanced by the rejoicing of the heavenly host at his birth. As a human infant he was subject to the machinations of Herod, while at the same time he received worship from the Magi. He submitted like a man to the baptism of John, but the act furnished immediate occasion for the thunderous voice of God to declare him to be the Beloved One. He was tempted by the devil, but immediately the angels of God ministered unto him. He experienced the manifestly human feelings of hunger, thirst, weariness, and the need of sleep, but at the same time gave all the greater evidences of his divinity by miraculously feeding a multitude with a few loaves and fishes, bestowing living water on the woman of Samaria, and rebuking the tempest that threatened to engulf his terrified disciples. He might weep in a moment of sympathy for bereaved friends, but suddenly the scene was changed by his raising the deceased from the tomb, though the burial had occurred four days earlier. Even the dark hour of his execution was miraculously illumined by a trembling of the elements. Though his hands and feet had been nailed to the cross, while hanging thus as a criminal he could open the gates of Paradise to a penitent and believing robber. In every experience that seemed genuinely human, he immediately manifested the power of deity. Indeed, these human traits served just the purpose of demonstrating by contrast his full equality with the Father.

One detects, however, in Leo's language the evidence of a state of mind in the West readier to appreciate the human side of Jesus' activity than was current among Eastern theologians. This does not mean that Western Catholicism showed any disposition to quarrel with the decisions of the great world-councils. It had had too large a part in the making of their decisions to feel any inclination to disagree with the outcome. The councils exhibited an interest in the regulation of belief, the conservation of tradition, and the suppression of minorities, all of which was entirely agreeable to Western ecclesiasticism. Orthodoxy in the West also had good reason to fear and hate the Arians, especially after the barbarian menace became serious. These border peoples had received the gospel from Arian teachers sometimes forced into the outlying regions of the Roman world by the Catholic opposition.

The so-called "Athanasian Creed," now generally recognized to have been a product of Western Catholicism in the fifth and following centuries, is a thoroughly orthodox document. On the question of Jesus' place in the godhead and the nature of the incarnation the Western church was in full accord with the decisions of the great councils. It went even beyond the Creed of Nicea in equalizing God and the Logos by insisting that the Holy Spirit proceeded jointly from the Father and the Son. Thus orthodoxy in the West stood not simply for a duality in unity but also for a trinity in unity.

With regard to Jesus' place in the godhead, the language of the Athanasian Creed is most explicit:

> The Catholic faith is this: that we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance, for there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Spirit. But the divinity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is all one, equal in glory, coeternal in majesty. Such as the Father is such is the Son, and such is the Holy Spirit; the Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Spirit uncreated; the Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Spirit incomprehensible; the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Spirit eternal; and yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal. . . . . The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord; and yet there are not three Lords, but one Lord. . . . . So we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say, there are three Gods or three Lords.

The same composite declaration is made regarding the incarnation:

> The right faith is this, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man; God of the substance of the Father; begotten before the worlds; and man, of the substance of his mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; equal to the Father in regard to his divinity, and less than the Father

in regard to his humanity; who, although he be God and man, is still not two but one Christ; one, however, not by conversion of divinity into flesh, but by assumption of humanity into God; wholly one, not by confusion of substance but by unity of person; for as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.'

While the creedal pronouncements on Christology in the West continued to reaffirm the inseparable divinity and humanity of Christ, there was a manifest disposition to make somewhat larger use of the human side of the Son's earthly career. This was not due to any conscious effort to be more faithful to Scripture or more just to logic than the East had been. The motivation came rather from the type of religion in which the people of the West found their greatest satisfactions as a result of their specific heritages and immediate experiences. This tendency was present in the life of the common man, and manifested itself even in the thinking of leading theologians, particularly after Greek speculative influences became less prevalent following the political separation of East and West with the death of Theodosius in the year 395.

Transcendental monotheism never had the same attraction for the Roman mind that it had for the Greek, nor was the divinization of a believer so generally regarded as the *summum bonum* in religion. The Roman divinities were not remote, apathetic beings, but were very human-like in their power of taking offense or feeling pleasure, in accordance with the services rendered them by their worshipers. Safe relations with these gods rested upon what might be called a "contract basis." The deities were pledged to do their duty toward their faithful subjects, and the secret of a valuable religion consisted largely in the worshiper's knowing how to perform properly an effective ritual. Satisfaction came to the devotee through feeling that he observed the correct sacred rites, that he held the traditional faith, that he belonged to the properly constituted religious group, and that through such means the emotions and attitudes of the Deity toward him were rendered kindly and generous.

The assumption that gods were creatures full of feeling was fundamental to the whole conflict between Christianity and its Roman persecutors. Even Christians never questioned the basal principle involved. It was a fundamental tenet of Roman religion that the welfare of the state depended upon the favor of the divinities, who were capable of entertaining feelings of satisfaction, on the one hand, or anger, on the other. So long as the citizens performed faithfully the established rites of the cults, the gods were supposed to insure the welfare of society. When the supernatural powers were neglected, displays of hostility on their part were a normal phenomenon. Christian apologists who addressed emperors took full cognizance of this way of thinking and assumed the validity of the assumptions on which it rested. Their defense was that the rulers of the state needed to cultivate the emotional favor of the true God, who would then display his pleasure by protecting the state more effectively than could any or all of his lesser rivals. These Christians never affirmed that God was an apathetic being, so infinitely remote from human affairs that citizens did not need to bind themselves by faithful pledges and diligent ritual observances to the powers of heaven in order to safeguard social and political life. The remedy proposed was that rulers should contract with the true and supreme God of the Christians for the protection of the Roman Empire. Constantine and his successors accepted the Christians' proposal, and into this pattern the Western theologians in particular had to fit the figure of Christ as the second person in the godhead.

The notion of contract with the Deity also involved the problem of monotheism. For the Western mind this was not essentially a philosophical issue, in the Platonic sense of preserving the absolute transcendence of ultimate Deity, but was a distinctly practical problem. If one worshiped Christ did one thereby worship God? Only if this were true could the favor of the supreme Deity be secured. The Christian needed to demonstrate to the imperial authorities that God and Christ were one in power and activity, and thus represented perfect divine harmony in the constitution and operation of religion. Stoicism rather than Platonism was the prevailing philosophy among the educated in the West when Christians first undertook their apologetic task, and the Stoic God was in his world, in fact pervaded it, although he exemplified a good measure of the Platonic apathy which the ideal Stoic man sought to emulate in his own emotional life. But the effort to be like God was itself an emotion realizable upon the strictly human level. Deity and man came together in the sphere of human effort and conduct.

In order to satisfy the Roman religious mind, God and man had to be brought together and safe relations had to be established on the stage of human action. Worship was more important than philosophy. Lactantius talked a language that Constantine could readily understand. This apologist needed to persuade the Emperor that the Christians, when they worshiped Christ, were not guilty of serving an inferior divinity. This was true, not because the Son and the Father were equal metaphysically, but because by a divine dispensation the two represent the same supernatural hierarchy. Since the Son was faithful to the most high Father and beloved by him, he was not separated from him, just as the stream could not be separated from the fountain, or the ray from the sun. The Scriptures had said regarding the Son, "They shall fall down unto thee and make supplication unto thee, since God is in thee and there is no other God beside thee." The arrangement was integral to the divine economy, hence both God and the Son "are justly called one God, for whatever is in the Father flows on to the Son, and whatever is in the Son descends from the Father."

Thus Arians, or other heretics, who pushed God so far away from the human sphere that they made him alone the supreme Deity, were really ditheists and consequently were a menace to society. By refusing to worship the Son, and claiming that the Father alone was worthy of reverence, they had virtually made it impossible for God and man to meet together. According to Lactantius, these people, by virtue of their refusal to worship the Son, had really lost the power of worshiping God. They had become, we are told, "ensnared by deceits of demons which they ought to have foreseen and guarded against, and by their carelessness they had lost the name and worship of God." Only those who received the Son and bore his name (Christian) could really serve Deity acceptably; "it is the Catholic church alone that retains true worship."[1] The heretics had misunderstood the character of true Deity by supposing that it was impossible for

[1] Lactantius *Divine Institutes* iv. 29 f.

God to be born of a woman and submit to such weaknesses and contempt as were displayed in the earthly career of Jesus, when he endured torture and was "affixed to the accursed cross." When they talked thus they certainly were using an argument that could not be counted upon to carry great weight with one schooled in Roman ways in religion.

To Western Christendom in earlier times it had not been at all uncongenial to speak of God as suffering in Christ; but in any event the sufferings of Jesus, like the afflictions of his persecuted disciples, were thought to be highly pleasing to the Deity. The martyr was God's man in an especial sense. It is no accident that the Western Gospel of Mark represents Jesus conspicuously in the rôle of martyr, in contrast with the sublime incarnate Logos of the Eastern Gospel of John.[1] Christians, instead of feeling that the agonies endured at the hands of their persecutors brought upon them degradation and shame, were disposed to welcome these experiences as an opportunity to display a kind of conduct highly pleasing to the Almighty. Christians knew the psychology of their Roman environment when they cited their agonies as evidence of the divine favor and proof of the satisfac-

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[1] On the influence of persecution as a formative factor in the history of early Christianity see D. W. Riddle, *The Martyrs: A Study in Social Control* (Chicago, 1931).

[illegible] [illegible] knows the both ways: a religion of wisdom & mysticism and a religion of practical power & practice.

tion which God found in their conduct. Tertullian[1] spoke as a Roman, and spoke truly, when he called the blood of Christians the seed of the church. As Minucius Felix remarked in a notable passage:

> How beautiful is the spectacle to God when a Christian does battle with pain; when he is drawn up against threats and punishments and tortures; when, mocking the noise of death, he treads under foot the horror of the executioner; when he raises up his liberty against kings and princes, and yields to God alone, whose he is; when, triumphant and victorious, he tramples upon the very man who has pronounced sentence against him.[2]

The Western background of thought and interest in practical religion left its mark upon Christology, notwithstanding the large heritage received from the East. The new tendencies became particularly marked in the fifth century. But for centuries before there had been a growing disposition in Western Christianity to picture God as a moral rather than a metaphysical being, who was capable of the emotions of love, hate, grace, and anger; whose heart overflowed with compassion for an unfortunate and lost humanity; who was worthily represented on earth by martyrs and confessors, over whom his watchful care was constant; and who was the author of a religion the very genius of which consisted in traveling the road to God by way

Surely! In I A.D. Paul & of Revelation for OT.

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[1] *Apol.* l. 13.

[2] *Octavius* xxxvii f.

of suffering, sacrifice, and penitence. Jesus, the hero of the Christian faith, had ideally embodied as God incarnate these very traits in his own life. This point of view was never entirely absent from Western Christology, although the menace of Arianism made it rather difficult at times to indulge this fondness for human-like traits in the incarnate Son. But the victory had been virtually won by the time of Augustine.

Deservedly great as is Augustine's theological fame, his contribution to the formal Christology of the Western church is perhaps one of his lesser distinctions. Although he had been taught Christianity by his mother, he finally entered the church by a devious route leading first through Manicheism and then through Neoplatonism. He was educated in Latin literature rather than in Greek learning, but the latter made some impression upon him as a result of the influence of Ambrose, who preached conciliar orthodoxy at Milan. In his work both as theologian and as statesman the Bishop of Milan had found ample occasion to resist the Arians. This fact is abundantly evident in his treatise on the Christian faith, written for the instruction of Prince Gratian. In this work the doctrine of the full godhood of the Son is expounded in true Nicene fashion, and although the problem of the incarnation had not yet become acute, it is perfectly apparent that had Ambrose lived in the next century and been present at the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon he would have taken his stand stoutly on the side of orthodoxy. In his treatment of the lowly aspects of Jesus' earthly life Ambrose anticipated Leo by writing:

> Jesus is weary with his journey that he may refresh the weary; he desires to drink when about to give spiritual drink to the thirsty; he was hungry when about to supply the food of salvation to the hungry; he dies to live again; he is buried to rise again; he hangs on the dreadful tree to strengthen those in dread; he veils the heaven with thick darkness that he may give light; he makes the earth to shake that he may make it strong; he rouses the sea that he may calm it; he opens the tombs of the dead that he may show they are the homes of the living; he is made of the Virgin that men may believe he is born of God; he feigns not to know that he may make the ignorant to know; as a Jew, he is said to worship, that the Son may be worshiped as true God.[1]

Augustine accepted, sometimes haltingly, sometimes heartily, the current orthodox belief regarding the full divinity of Jesus in the godhead and the genuineness of his deity while truly a man on earth. How the divine and human could dwell together in a fleshly tabernacle was a problem that did not greatly trouble him, at least when he had finally shaken himself loose from his Manichean antecedents. The Manicheans, like the Gnostics before them, believed that evil resided in matter, and therefore it was quite impossible for God to dwell in human flesh. But Neoplatonism had taught Augustine to abandon Manichean dualism and to seek communion with the Absolute through the medium of a mystical experience. The Neoplatonic quest was for divine revelation rather than for release from evil matter. Augustine was never able to liberate himself from great concern with the problem of evil, but when first Neoplatonism and then Christianity were espoused the difficulty was solved by transferring the seat of evil from matter to the human will. Thereupon the issue became distinctly a moral one. Henceforth it was possible to interpret the incarnation in terms of moral and spiritual values, rather than in the language of philosophical speculation.

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[1] *Christian Faith* v. 4. 53.

In this respect Augustine's interpretation of Jesus became very important for the Christian religion, although it provided no ready solution for the problem of Christ's divine and human nature on its speculative side. The incarnation now became a magnificent exhibition of the divine condescension expressive of the love and grace of God. Now one could, with a sense of relief, affirm that "it was not through dialectic that it pleased God to save his people." One's appreciation of the divinity of Christ in his earthly manifestation rested upon an ethical rather than an intellectual basis. He was accepted as the supreme revelation, the validity of which was demonstrated by the type of life he had lived, and by precept and example inspired others to live. Augustine could believe that Plato might have been glad to become a Christian could he have known of the power which Christianity had over the lives of men, in consequence of the power and wisdom of God exhibited in the career of Jesus. Thus the incarnation had been a display of moral grandeur. God had shown men an incomparable example in humility by condescending to dwell in human flesh. In this act he had set before the eyes of mankind the true divinity of the Christian virtues. The temptations of Jesus, for example, were designed to direct man to the higher pathway where he would refuse to be allured by the desires of pleasure, or the satisfactions of pride, or the dangers of curiosity.

Not new with
Augustine — St. Paul —

It need not surprise us to discover that Augustine had little interest in gospel history for its own sake. He composed a harmony of the gospels and expounded at length these sacred texts, yet he never attempted to write a fresh account of the life of Jesus. He was wholly concerned with the display of deity revealed in the scriptural records; and while he prized highly the human qualities in the earthly Jesus, he regarded them as only a transitory phase of history to culminate more gloriously

Why should he?

in the resurrection, exaltation, and entrance of Christ once more into the godhead there to resume his place of complete identification with absolute Deity. Throughout its course the life of Christ had the value of revelation and example. Divinity took on the weakness of humanity in order that weak humanity might cast itself on divinity and thus rise with Christ to eternal life.[1]

In the Catholic theology of the West essentially the same picture of Jesus continued to be reproduced century after century, as we have already seen it in Leo's *Tome* and the Athanasian Creed. Jesus was always conspicuous, in the first place, for his position of full equality with God in the Trinity; and upon earth he partook truly and completely of both the divine and the human natures. The significance of his earthly career resided primarily in his display of divinity. The import of this exhibition might be variously presented, according to the circumstances and needs of the time. By Anselm, who sought to interpret the reasons for the God-man in terms of ideas of justice that were characteristic of the feudal age, and a penitential system that now prevailed in the medieval church, the lowliness and suffering of Christ naturally became a series of acts to satisfy the honor of God and establish a fund of merit available for men. The Schoolmen, and particularly Thomas Aquinas, their greatest representative, applied an elaborate system of dialectics to the interpretation of Christ's person, arriving at results still prominent in the orthodoxy of both Catholics and Protestants. The doctrine of the Trinity was reinforced by many new and strange arguments, but the basal tradition was fully maintained. The same was true of the dogma of the incarnation. But in the process of dialectic the lowly Jesus became ever more obscured, less lifelike, and remote from the realistic living of a genuine man. The Jesus of Catholic theology was essentially a divine and heavenly, rather than a human and earthly, figure.

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[1] *Confessions* vii. 18.

CHAPTER TEN

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THE JESUS OF MEDIEVAL PIETY

THE medieval theologians were essentially dialecticians; they endeavored to establish the truth about Jesus by a system of logic rather than by venturesome forays into the realm of metaphysics. The latter procedure, commonly termed "speculative," had been the prevailing interest among Eastern theologians and continued in a measure to manifest itself in the West in the methods of men like Hilary, Ambrose, and Augustine. But with the rise of scholasticism the situation changed. Now one put forward a traditional item of belief, set up and struck down all possible objections that might be urged against it, and concluded that its truth was established both on the basis of revelation and by the demonstrative force of human reason. Faith was primary, reason secondary; but the latter was given a larger and larger measure of attention. Augustine had said that understanding does not precede but follows faith, which itself rests on authority. Anselm accepted this proposition, but felt a much stronger urge to attempt to understand by logical demonstration the content of his belief. This was the impulsion that prompted him to write his famous treatise *Why the God-Man.* Henceforth this interest rapidly increased among scholastic theologians, until Jesus became pre-eminently an object on which to practice one's dialectical skill.

By the twelfth century medieval life had grown far too complex to be satisfied with any cut-and-dried interpretation of Jesus, such as might be derived from the tomes of the scholastic theologians. The feeling of discontent was not so much an urge toward aggressive disputation as hunger for another type of religious satisfaction. Now there was a free interplay of imagination, emotion, and action over the whole range of life's experiences.

In the Christian art of the medieval church a new life of Christ had been written, not in words but in pictures. Although for centuries apocryphal gospels had been officially discounted, the imagination of Christians had found a new way of cultivating this interest. Without publishing additional narratives to supplement those of the sacred canon, one was still able to portray vividly the image of Jesus in accordance with the demands of popular piety. Devotion expressed itself on canvas, or in glass and stone, rather than in written speech on papyrus or parchment. As a matter of fact, the apocryphal gospels had been typical of an interest in Jesus that was rarely if ever absent from Western Catholicism, even though these legendary histories had been dismissed from the Holy Scriptures ever

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since the days of Athanasius. While it was no longer permitted to write a new gospel of the infancy, artistic imagination did not cease to play with this sparsely recorded period of Jesus' career. It was retold anew in many a picture of the Madonna and the Christ-child. Also Passion stories were transformed into pictorial displays of Jesus' final journey to the cross. Jesus now spoke more effectively from the crucifix than from the written page, as simple souls, often unable even to read a book, exalted their spirits by the use of the physical eye when they gazed on the image of God depicted in human form.

Hardly less significant than the creations of artists and sculptors was the dramatization of the gospel story. Especially the scenes from the Passion lent themselves readily to this purpose. Both in literature and on the stage the Jesus of drama spoke anew to the peoples of Western Europe, as indeed he speaks today to multitudes who still flock to the little hamlet of Oberammergau that they may witness once more the enactment of a medieval Passion play. Epic poetry also made its contribution to the re-creation of Jesus' image. As early as the fourth century a Spanish presbyter, Juvencus, had essayed, in classical Virgilian style, to "sing the noble deeds of Christ on earth." A host of successors, later abandoning Greek and Latin models, sang the glory of Jesus' deeds after the pattern of the local heroes of the new European peoples. The epic Jesus was a less somber figure than the dramatic, but he was shaped perhaps even more strictly in accord with the medieval man's own image. The epic and dramatic Jesus became still more appealing when combined with a musical expression of religious sentiment, which in time rose to the noble heights of spiritual emotion still to be experienced in the grandeur of a Handelian oratorio.

The figure of Jesus had now become so objectively real that it was believed possible to describe the way in which he had looked to the people of his generation. Legend traced the ideal portrait back even to Roman records:

> It is read in the annals of the Romans that our Lord Jesus Christ, who was called by the Gentiles the prophet of truth, was of stature middling tall, and comely, having a revered countenance, which they that look upon may love and fear; having hair of the hue of an unripe hazel-nut and smooth almost down to his ears, but from the ears in curling locks somewhat darker and more shining, waving over his shoulders; having a parting at the middle of the head after the manner of the Nazareans; a brow smooth and very calm, with a face without wrinkle or blemish, which a moderate ruddiness makes beautiful; with the nose and mouth no fault at all can be found; having a full beard of the color of his hair, not long but a little forked at the chin, having an expres-

sion simple and mature, the eyes grey, flashing and clear; in rebuke terrible, in admonition kind and lovable, cheerful yet keeping gravity; sometimes he wept, but he never laughed; in stature of body tall and straight, with hands and arms fair to look upon; in talk grave, reserved and modest; handsome among the sons of men.[1]

No one today needs to be told that this language was inspired by the portrait-types current in the medieval artist's environment and not by historical memories of the Jesus of Palestine.

Underlying these various ways of popularly depicting Jesus there was a common *leit motif*. In apocryphal legend, in the creations of painter and sculptor or poet and musician, the controlling interest was to make more real, more vivid, and more adorable the figure of the divine Redeemer. Men yearned to gaze on the light that dazzles and blinds, that under its rays they might experience in realistic fashion the transformation of their own weaknesses, fears, hopes, and joys into an assurance of triumph and peace. In the figure of Jesus, God was vividly portrayed as a man, not in the cold affirmations of the creeds or the wearisome logic of the Schoolmen, but in the scenery of the common man's vital experiences. Jesus was born a divine being, while at the same time he was a child of man. In contrast with human weakness, he possessed unlimited supernatural power and knowledge. He had human features, but they embodied every ideal of beauty that the artistic imagination could devise. He suffered and died as men did, but he triumphed over death as men hoped they might. Not by diligent study of historical documents or by philosophical speculations, but by a direct projection of his own hopes and aspirations into legend, art, and music did the medieval pietist create his picture of the God-man.

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[1] E. von Dobschütz, *Christus-Bilder* (Leipzig, 1899), Beilage VIIIB, p. 319**; cited by M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford, 1924), pp. 477 f.

This yearning to experience God in human life by stressing the manhood of Jesus received strong stimuli from still other quarters. In the Eucharist, the most sacred rite of the church, Christ's physical presence was believed to be available. The divine words by which the miracle of transformation was wrought, even when spoken by the humblest priest, were completely effective. Christ in actual presence was now at hand to minister unto the sick, to aid the helpless, to satisfy the yearning of the pious spirit for mystical communion with Deity, and to meet the needs of the soul in the hour of its departure into the great unknown. This display of divine condescension awakened in the devout worshiper an emotion of great wonder and gratitude. He thought less than his Eastern brother had of the opportunity thus afforded to become himself divinized by partaking of the divine food, and saw rather in the Mass an exemplary display of God's surrender to the welfare of men, which could be worthily requited only by man's surrendering himself completely to Christ. The miracle that was wrought in the rite brought Christ into the world at the present moment as really as he had been in the world at the beginning of Christian history. Thus was fulfilled the promise of the Lord himself when he had said, "I will not leave them fasting and without any refection lest peradventure they might fail in their way."[1]

The same Christ who was present in the Eucharist, and who had surrendered himself up a complete sacrifice for the benefit of men, was so manlike and so capable of being copied by the believer that a complete surrender on the part of the devotee was demanded in the Mass. Thus Christ speaks in the language of the writer of the *Imitation:*

> O man, as I did offer myself and my free-will unto God my Father, my hands spread on the cross and my body naked for thy sins; insomuch that nothing remained in me, but all passed in sacrifice to appease his wrath, in like wise thou oughtest to offer unto me willingly thyself in pure oblation daily in the Mass with all thine affections and strengths, as profoundly and fervently as thou mayest.[2]

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[1] Thomas à Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, Book IV, Chap. iii.

[2] *Ibid.*, Chap. viii.

And so the believer pledged himself to give his body and blood to Christ as really as Christ gave himself to men. Thus Jesus became present not alone in the elements of the Eucharist but in the daily living of his saints, who made it their supreme ideal to imitate his example.

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Devotion to the cause of the human Jesus received a tremendous impetus also through the Crusades. The very land where the God-man had lived, the terrestrial spots where relics and shrines sacred to his memory were to be found—all needed to be rescued from the defiling hands of the infidel. Now Christians had a unique opportunity to exhibit their loyalty and devotion to the Savior. He was almost as real to the eyes of the ardent crusaders as he would have been a thousand years before could they have marshaled a Western army to invade Jerusalem and rescue the distressed Nazarene when Pilate was about to nail him to the cross. When the attempt to recover the Holy Land by force finally proved futile, pious Christians did not lose their vision of the man Christ Jesus who had suffered and died in Palestine. Rather, they caught this vision up into their daily living and strove to emulate Jesus' example of self-giving service in the cause of humanity. They would not fight the infidel, but would shrink from no hardship in their effort to convert him by preaching as Jesus had preached; and if their efforts resulted in afflictions such as had come upon him, they felt that their work was none the less approved by God.

Distinctive circumstances in Western Christendom made it the task of practical piety rather than of speculative theology to preserve a lively sense of the full manhood of Christ. Leaders endowed with a vivid imagination and a zeal for active piety were determined upon showing to the world the type of life that Christ had lived. The inflexibilities of theological formulas could not shackle the popular imagination or extinguish the desire of the mystic for a sense of identification with the Savior. Theologians might peruse the gospels for the purpose of gathering texts to prove the dogma of the Trinity, the incarnation, the atonement, the validity of the sacraments, or the hope of immortality; but for a Bernard of Clairvaux or a Francis of Assisi the lowly life of the humble Nazarene spoke a more practically significant message. Yet it was through mysticism rather than history that these devout spirits thought it possible truly to recover the attitudes and ideals of Jesus.

One who travels the mystic way in religion is always in danger of missing the significance of action. But the medieval mystics, who sought to realize the highest ideal of religion through communion with Christ, fortunately kept in view the manhood of Jesus, and thus they combined with their contemplation a determination to exemplify in their social relations the same godlike type of conduct that had been exhibited in the earthly career of their Master. Bernard prized highly the meditative life.[1] It was the aim of the preacher to direct men's attention to the desirability of devotion to and loving contemplation of Christ as the "bridegroom of the soul." Yet one ought not to tarry too long over the sweetness of contemplation when more worthy fruits were to be had from practical ministration to the needy. His famous sermons on the Song of Songs that exerted so great an influence upon later medieval mystics had, in spite of their extravagant imagery, laid much stress upon the concrete figure and activity of the earthly Jesus. In a striking passage Bernard remarks that "dry is all food of the soul if it is not sprinkled with the oil of Christ. When thou writest promise me nothing unless I read Jesus in it. When thou conversest with me on religious themes promise me nothing if I hear not Jesus' voice. Jesus—honey to the taste, music to the ear, joyousness to the soul."[2]

A century later, with Francis of Assisi, the mystical appreciation of Christ stresses even more strongly the necessity of modeling one's life strictly after Christ's example. The missionary zeal that characterized Jesus in his service to his fellows, particularly his renunciation of all worldly possessions, was the goal toward which Francis strove. With fervent admiration he exclaimed: "Poverty was in the crib and like a faithful squire she kept herself armed in the great combat thou didst wage for our redemption. During thy passion she alone did not forsake thee. Mary, thy mother, stood at the foot of the cross, but poverty mounted it with thee and clasped thee in her embrace unto the end, and when thou wast dying of thirst, as a faithful spouse she prepared for thee the gall. Thou didst expire in the ardor of her embraces, nor did she leave thee when dead, O Lord Jesus, for she allowed not thy body to rest elsewhere than in a borrowed grave. O poorest Jesus, the grace I beg of thee is to bestow on me the treasure of the greatest poverty." Francis did not think that he could see his Lord "coming in the clouds of dogma," nor indeed find him fully in the sacramental presence at the Eucharist; he was not adequately revealed until met on the highways of life reincarnated in the person of his faithful followers.

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[1] The monograph by M. C. Slotemaker de Bruine, *Het ideaal der navolging van Christus ten tijde van Bernard van Clairvaux* (Wageningen, 1926), is particularly valuable in this connection.

[2] *Sermons*, XV, 6.

In the preaching of the German mystics—Eckhart, Suso, Tauler—again Jesus figured conspicuously as a model of practical piety. Although the vision of God is the mystic's ideal, Eckhart insisted that the presence of God is to be realized in the life of action even more truly than in the quietude of passive communion, where thought is fixed on the Deity. If it should happen that one were experiencing a rapture like Paul's and there appeared upon the scene a sick man who needed help, Eckhart believed that one ought to forsake the rapture and serve the needy, thus displaying true Christian love and following the example of Christ. The highest ideal was to imitate the sacrificial self-giving example of the Lord Jesus. The same attitude appears again and again in Eckhart's followers, especially Suso, Tauler, and the unknown author of the *Theologia Germanica.* It was in the humility of Jesus that one discovered the key to the heart of the Deity, and in a Christian life modeled after this pattern alone could one live entirely pleasing to God.

The sermons of Tauler contain many fine passages expressing appreciation of the exemplary piety of Jesus. To cite a single illustration:

> Wilt thou with St. John rest on the loving heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, thou must be transformed into the beauteous image of our Lord by a constant, earnest contemplation thereof, considering his holy meekness and humility, the deep, fiery love that he bore to his friends and his foes, and his mighty, obedient resignation which he manifested in all the paths wherein his Father called him to tread. Next call to mind the boundless charity which he showed to all men, and also his blessed poverty. Heaven and earth were his, and he

called them not his own. In all his words and deeds he looked only to the glory of his Father and the salvation of mankind. And now ye must gaze much more closely and deeply into the glorious image of our Lord Jesus Christ than I can show you with my outward teaching, and maintain a continual, earnest effort and aspiration after it. Then look attentively at thyself, how unlike thou art to this image, and behold thy own littleness. Here will thy Lord let thee rest on him. . . . . In the glorious likeness of Christ thou wilt be made rich, and find all the solace and sweetness in the world.[1]

In the *Theologia Germanica*,[2] which Luther said had, next to the Bible and Augustine, influenced him more than any other book he had ever read, one is told that the life of Christ is the noblest and best that ever has been or ever can be lived. To imitate it will call for great self-denial, even perchance the forsaking of "high skill and reasoning"; but in the demand that all else be sacrificed in order to imitate Christ lies the great glory of the effort. Because Christ lived the God-life man also ought now, as a disciple of Christ, to live like God himself:

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[1] From the "Sermon for the First Sunday after Easter," as translated in Susanna Winkworth, *The History and Life of the Reverend Doctor John Tauler, etc.* (New York, 1858), p. 345.

[2] Translated from the German by Susanna Winkworth (London, 1893).

> The man shall set a watch over himself and all that belongeth to him within and without, and shall so direct, govern, and guard his heart, as far as in him lieth, that neither will nor desire, love nor longing, opinion nor thought, shall spring up in his heart, or have any abiding-place in him, save such as are meet for God and would beseem him well, if God himself were made man. . . . . Behold, he in whom it should be thus, whatever he had within or did without, would be all of God, and the man would be in his life a follower of Christ more truly than we can understand or set forth.[1]

In an age when Jesus' name was upon all lips, and many earnest souls were devoutly yearning to reproduce in their living ideals which he was supposed to have exemplified, it is perhaps surprising that more attention was not given to writing an elaborate *Life of Jesus*, in something like the modern sense of the term. The notion of expanding the meager gospel story into an extensive treatise with a view to rendering the teaching and activity of Jesus more easily available for the purposes of Christians in the later biographer's own day came to somewhat definite and elaborate expression in the middle of the fourteenth century. But already for a hundred years or more less pretentious works, and writings of an occasional sort, had abounded in references to deeds or words of Jesus reproduced to stimulate feeling and inspire devotion. When a new formal *Life* was written, by Ludolph of Saxony, a Carthusian monk who died on April 30, 1377, the author was able to cite from the literature of his predecessors a host of witnesses to support his interpretations and applications of Jesus' work and teaching to current medieval life.

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[1] Chap. lii.

A somewhat closer examination of Ludolph's *Vita Christi* will serve to acquaint one in greater detail with the way in which medieval pietists treated the story of Jesus' career. As proved by its popularity, this was the most representative of common interests. The manuscript, written while Latin was still generally in use, was first printed in two thick folio volumes in the year 1474. Immediately it gained wide popularity in Continental Europe. In the course of time some ninety editions of the Latin text were published. Translations also appeared in different vernaculars—German, French, Dutch, Italian, Spanish. The book was less popular in Germany, England, and other Protestant areas, but the type of biography initiated by Ludolph has become widely current in many circles where the author's name is utterly unknown or, at best, incidentally if not somewhat disdainfully mentioned.[1]

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[1] Adequate treatments of Ludolph are not easy to find in modern literature. Protestant encyclopedias treat him most casually, if at all; and Roman Catholic books usually assign him small space. There

In several particulars this *Life of Christ* seems almost modern, in contrast with the older type of gospel composition. For example, Ludolph abandoned entirely any effort to blend together into a continuous narrative the complete gospel record, as Tatian and his successors had done. To produce a harmony, or general conspectus of the canonical gospels, was no part of Ludolph's purpose. Also he was not greatly concerned with the apologetic task of defending the reliability and mutual self-consistency of the several evangelists—the motive that Again! inspired Augustine to compose his notable work on the harmony of the gospels. And the free play of fancy applied to those periods of Jesus' life where the canonical books are silent, a temptation that enticed the authors of several apocryphal books, did not allure Ludolph. He felt at liberty to fill in gaps, or employ data from the apocrypha, but he

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is, however, an excellent article, "Ludolphe de Saxe," contributed by the late head of the Carthusian house at Strassburg, in Vacant, Mangenot, and Amann, *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* (Paris, 1926), Vol. IX. H. Böhmer (*Studien zur Geschichte der Gesellschaft Jesu* [Bonn, 1914], I, 302–8) gives valuable statistical information, and on pp. 56–71 of "Texts" prints Ludolph's "Prooemium"; and for the influence of this book in bringing about the conversion of Ignatius Loyola see p. 30. No English rendering of Ludolph's *Vita* seems ever to have been made, and of the French translations, the latest and best is that of Florent Broquin, *La grande vie de Jésus-Christ par Ludolphe le Chartreux* (Paris, 1870–73), in seven volumes, with Introduction and notes.

gave far greater attention to the interpretation of canonical materials. Nor was he, like certain outstanding predecessors in Western Christendom, primarily interested to expound Christological dogma.

While Ludolph heartily accepted the Christ of the creed about whom the theologians speculated, and thought himself in complete accord with the traditional Christology of the church, his fundamental interests moved in a different direction. He was pre-eminently concerned with the practical and devotional side of piety, and was chiefly desirous of presenting Jesus as the one who, by his personal conduct and teaching, constituted the inexhaustible fountain of true religious inspiration and guidance for people in the fourteenth century. Hence Ludolph wrote, not so much to reproduce the gospel story, or to substantiate ecclesiastical dogma, as to stimulate practical piety and satisfy the yearnings of the mystic by making vivid and real the presence of an idealized Jesus in the medieval world. In this particular also we may say that Ludolph tended to be modern; he composed the first elaborately interpretative biography, primarily designed to render the gospel tradition extensively applicable to the immediate needs of an author's contemporaries.

Mechanically, the plan of treatment is very simple. A few introductory pages state the aim and method of the work. The book is divided into two parts, or volumes, the first covering the career of Jesus from the time of his birth up to his healing of the blind man of Bethsaida, just before Peter makes his famous confession at Caesarea Philippi. The second part opens with this incident, which is regarded by the author as the most significant turning-point in the history. After Peter's notable pronouncement of faith, the emphasis in the gospel narrative is thought to center upon the approaching Passion of Christ, with its fitting climax in the crucifixion, the resurrection, the pentecostal experience, and kindred phenomena.

Part I contains ninety-two chapters and Part II eighty-nine. They cover more than eight hundred folio pages. Each chapter is provided with a formal title indicative of the incident or teaching in the life of Jesus which the author is about to expound. Usually a phrase from one of the gospels, or some other scriptural passage, constitutes the point of departure, but thereafter it is the main topic rather than the text of scripture that is developed. The interpreter passes very quickly from his text to the thought he desires to emphasize in connection with problems of religious living confronting the people of his day. In support of the lessons which he wishes to impart he calls to his aid a wide range of testimony from earlier Christian writers, both Eastern and Western. In fact, pagan authors—

like Cicero, Horaçe, Ovid, Seneca—are occasionally summoned to his assistance. Each chapter closes with a prayer appealing to Jesus to support and confirm the author in his obedience to the truth and ideals that have been set forth in the preceding exposition.

Ludolph begins his book with the apostolic pronouncement, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11). The fundamental significance of Christ consists in his effectiveness for the salvation of sinners. This salvation is to be realized not only by belief in a dogma of atonement, but also, and perhaps more surely, by an appreciation of the life and teaching of Jesus, as one concentrates attention on his earthly career. Hence the value of pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Ludolph laments that Christians in the fourteenth century show so little zeal to "wrest from the hands of their enemies the soil that Jesus consecrated with his blood." But the devout still went on the difficult journey, and the genuineness and violence of their emotions on visiting the sacred sites had been known to bring tears even to the eyes of the Saracens.

A new *Life of Christ* was not to be undertaken thoughtlessly or without a well-considered plan of procedure. Ludolph was aware that the information contained in the gospels was insufficient, at least quantitatively, for his task. The gospels needed to be supplemented by interpretations drawn from earlier Christian teachers, and by the testimony of the Bible as a whole. And the ultimate aim of the work was not to cater to an idle curiosity or to satisfy a craving for novelty. The worthy end in view was the attainment of the more excellent type of religious devotion and spiritual idealism capable of being engendered by concentrated meditation upon the life and message of Jesus. Ludolph recognized that not everything in the gospels contributed toward this central purpose and consequently he deliberately passed over some items without discussion. He consciously selected and developed those features that seemed to him best suited to the cultivation of piety. Hence he felt at liberty to exercise a large measure of freedom in his choice and interpretation of texts; and since not everything that Christ had said and done had been recorded in the brief gospel narratives, Ludolph believed that a biographer was in duty bound to expand and supplement the story as told by the evangelists. But this task was to be performed with the utmost caution and sincerity.

Ludolph's statement of his method is so simple and clear that we shall let him speak for himself: "Not everything that is recorded in the gospels is to be investigated; only so much as contributes to edification is to be selected. Nor are you to think that everything which we may regard Christ as having said or done is contained in the gospels, but for the sake of making the story more impressive I shall present the narrative to you as though it had actually happened, or can be justly believed to have happened in accordance with certain imaginative reconstructions which the mind variously apprehends. For in dealing with divine scripture we are able to believe and set forth a variety of interpretation to expedite faith, provided it be not contrary to vital truth or justice or teaching, that is, not contrary to faith and good customs. But indeed whoever asserts concerning God anything that is not capable of proof, or true to natural reason or conscience or faith, or in accord with sacred scripture, he presumptuously sins. When, therefore, you find me saying that the Lord Jesus, or other persons introduced into the narrative, said or did anything which cannot be proved by scripture, you will accept nothing beyond what pious meditation demands. Accept it as if I said, I think that the good Jesus said or did thus and so, and the like." Ludolph's successors have not always been so honest with themselves or so candid with their public.

Following this explicit statement of purpose and method, Ludolph momentarily halts his exposition to appeal to "the Lord Jesus Christ, son of the living God" to help the author, "weak and miserable sinner" that he is, to order his thoughts and words and actions in accordance with the divine law, that in all things he may conform to the will of Christ and merit salvation both now and throughout eternity. With this pious declaration he launches upon his constructive task. In distinction from the large body of current devotional literature he specifically entitles his book a *Life of Christ Produced by Ludolph of Saxony, a Member of the Sacred Order of Carthusians.*

Ludolph would have been quite out of touch with the spirit of his age had he not chosen as the topic for his opening chapter "the divine and eternal generation of Christ," and selected for his text the opening words of the Fourth Gospel. Those heretics who have held that Christ was only a man, neither eternal nor older than Mary, are proved to be in error by the very first words of the gospel, "In the beginning was the Word." Also to deny the personal distinction between the Father and the Son is to belie the scriptural statement that "the Word was with God." Similarly, the clause "and the Word was God" attests the consubstantial quality, or unity of substance, of the Father and the Son. The unity of nature and the distinction of persons are to be rigidly maintained, along with their coeternity. And, lastly, the Father and the Son are inseparable in their operations—"all things were made through him."

Ludolph, however, finds a moral significance even amid these abstruse theological speculations.

He would have his readers note that no good work is possible apart from God. And as all virtuous works pertain to life, so all unworthy activities are works of death. Justification for this opinion is found in the scriptural remark that apart from Christ there is no life, and that he is the life of his creation. Ludolph lingers fondly on this practical issue, fortifying the lesson by other scripture from both the Old and the New Testament, and by citations from Origen, Jerome, Augustine, Gregory, and even Seneca and the Platonist who, according to Augustine, had said that the opening words of John's Gospel ought to be engraved in gold letters and set up in churches and public buildings.

Merely to list the one hundred and eighty-one chapter headings of Ludolph's two volumes would consume more space than is now at our disposal. But this enumeration of titles would traverse familiar ground. The betrothal of the virgin, the birth of John and of Jesus, the genealogy of the Savior, Joseph's desire to put Mary aside secretly, the edict of Caesar Augustus, the circumcision of Jesus, the visit of his parents to the temple, the apparition to Joseph, the return from Egypt, the boy Jesus in the temple, the work and life of John, his understanding of his mission, his discourse on the necessity of repentance, and the baptism of Jesus by John are illustrative of the sequence of events noted by Ludolph preparatory to bringing

Jesus himself actively upon the scene. In a similarly detailed way he pursues the gospel story to the end and even beyond the canonical records. Several chapters are devoted to various post-resurrection appearances of Jesus—the appearance to his mother Mary, to Mary Magdalene, to the group in Galilee, to Peter and Joseph and James the Less and the holy Fathers, to the disciples when Thomas was absent and again when he was present, to seven disciples beside the Sea of Tiberius, to the eleven disciples in Galilee and also to the five hundred brethren, all followed by an "Epilogue" on the appearances in general. Chapter lxxxi treats of the ascension, and chapter lxxxii discusses briefly the gospels as scripture and the articles of the creed, while chapters lxxxiv–lxxxix interpret the pentecostal experience, the praise due the Deity, the assumption and worship of the blessed Virgin, the final judgment, eternal punishments, and the heavenly glory; while the final chapter is a brief conclusion.

In his treatment of miracles, as in his statements about dogma, Ludolph is strictly orthodox, but his interest in the supernatural centers on the practical religious values involved rather than on questions of apologetics. By way of illustration, his treatment of the healing of the leper may be cited. It is typical of many such incidents. The prayer with which the chapter closes makes evident the author's concern with actual life rather than theory:

> Lord Jesus Christ, thou who hast descended from the lofty eminence of the Father's throne and from the virginal womb to heal the leprosy of the human race, behold, I, leprous and bespotted with manifold sinful stains, adore thee, O Lord; if thou wilst thou canst make me clean. Stretch forth thy gracious and loving hand, touch my inward and outward parts, leprous that I am penitently invoking thee to have mercy upon me, and rebuke the disease of my transgression. My God and my Compassion, who desires not the death of the sinner but rather that he be converted and live, effect these things in me, a sinner, in order that my soul die not but that I may be converted and live with thee throughout eternity.

All the various deeds of Jesus, as well as numerous external events connected with his career, lend themselves in Ludolph's exposition to the services of piety and exalted mystical contemplation. Mary's impregnation was a genuinely supernatural phenomenon, yet it is readily understandable by the common man; the Holy Spirit came upon the virgin as the power of the sun rises upon the rose and the lily rendering them fruitful. When the mother of Jesus visited the temple to make the legal sacrifice for the first-born male child her offering was that of a poor woman—a pair of turtledoves and two young pigeons. This was not because she had not been enriched by the wealth received from the Magi, but because, with exemplary piety, she had immediately distributed the gold to the poor. Jesus had not felt any need of a cleansing bath, but when the proper moment arrived he had said to his mother that he was now going to John's baptism in order to glorify and manifest his Father and show him to the world for the salvation of souls. He had waited until he was thirty years of age so as to reveal the mystery of the Trinity and confirm the validity of the Decalogue—three times ten are thirty. If Jesus appeared to be lax in love toward father and mother and relatives, his purpose was to make plain that the creator is to be preferred to the creature. Jesus' seeming helplessness before his enemies at the time of his arrest and execution was to be explained by altruistic motives. Although he possessed in himself the very power through which the world had been created, in his voluntary humility he sought to teach men that patience alone overcomes the world. Ludolph, following Augustine, sees in the three languages of the inscription on the cross a testimony to the complete supremacy of Jesus, the Hebrew in which the law had been written being symbolic of religion, the Greek used by gentile sages indicating wisdom, and the Latin because of Roman domination indicating power. Thus it was said symbolically that Jesus is the king of all religion, of all wisdom, and of all power.

It was in the interpretation of Jesus' teaching that Ludolph's genius for practical piety and exalted feeling was most charmingly displayed. His summarized exposition of the several phrases in the Lord's Prayer is certainly a model of its kind.

> Our Father—lofty in creation, sweet in love, rich in inheritance. Who art in heaven—mirror of eternity, crown of delight, treasurehouse of happiness. Holy be thy name—that it may be honey in the mouth, music in the ear and devotion in the heart. Thy kingdom come—delightful without confusion, tranquil without perturbation, secure without loss. Thy will be done in earth as in heaven—that all things hateful to thee we may hate, whom thou lovest we may love, and what is pleasing to thee we may fulfil. Give us today our daily bread—the bread of teaching, repentance and virtue. And forgive us our debts—whatsoever we have committed against thee or against neighbors or against ourselves. As also we forgive our debtors—who offend us in words or in persons or in things. And lead us not into temptation—of the world, the flesh and the devil. But deliver us from evil—present, past and future.

Jesus' admonitions for worthy living are applied over a wide range of conduct involving issues vital to Ludolph and his contemporaries. The study of the Sermon on the Mount closes with this pregnant petition:

> Most compassionate Lord Jesus Christ, suffer me to enter the palace of salvation and the life of glory by the strait way of justice and the narrow door of repentance; teach me to shun the wiles of deceivers and grant me to imitate the simplicity and innocence of a spiritual sheep. Suffer me to fix my heart's desire on heaven, not on earth nor on the trifles of temporal words, but rather may I deserve to be found faithful in the fruits of good works. Suffer me to do the will of the heavenly Father and, hearing thy words, may I perform them that, established in thee, I may not be separated from thee by any temptations.

The leaders of the church in Ludolph's day came in for much sharp criticism at the hands of Jesus as interpreted by our author. But the ideal attitude of the layman is one of respectful obedience. In commenting on Jesus' consolation of the disciples in the midst of their labors, Ludolph prays:

> Lord Jesus Christ, good Master, grant me thus for thy name's sake to revere and receive the prophets who declare thee in their teaching, and the righteous men who represent thee by their good life, and thy disciples and messengers who announce thee in whatsoever way; and to render them ministrations and benefactions of love in order that I may be worthy to obtain with them the reward thou bestowest on their attainments. Also grant me, Lord, my God, respectfully to listen to prelates, preachers, and priests, and to acquiesce by obey-

ing their admonitions in order that along with those who obey the truth I may be worthy to find favor with thee.

Such expressions of humility and obedience do not, however, prevent Ludolph from aiming many sharp shafts of criticism in the name of Jesus against the clerics and monks of the fourteenth century. The sixty-eighth chapter of Part I is a classic on this subject. The notorious ambition of the clergy and their quest for honors and privileges are sharply rebuked. It is difficult, if not indeed impossible, that the sweet fruit of charity should come forth from the bitter root of ambition, such as James and John cherished when they asked Jesus the privilege of sitting one on his right hand and the other on his left in his Kingdom. Alas today, comments Ludolph, the clergy commonly seek honor not labor, glory and not suffering, and grasp after the name of distinction rather than a reputation for virtue. The criticisms made by Bernard are still applicable; everywhere from every age and class, from educated and ignorant alike, men run to ecclesiastical charges, although nowadays everyone who is successful in his quest troubles himself with no further cares when he has attained to his charge.

Seven distinct evils are specified: First is the custom of seeking promotions through solicitations made by one's self or one's friends. On the other hand, no worthy person will seek the office, and when chosen he ought, like Aaron, to accept it with reluctance. Otherwise genuine virtue is impossible of attainment. Only he who has been called by the Lord is a proper appointee. The elections of bishops by princes has been mainly responsible for the perversion of the office. The evil is one of long standing. Ludolph recalls the occasion when Louis the Pious had asked a certain devout person why bishops were no longer holy as they used to be. The monk answered that formerly they were chosen regularly by electors through the invocation and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but now the matter is taken care of by others through requests and agreements, hence bishops are not holy now as once they were. They ought to remember that Christ pronounced condemnation upon those who love the chief seats—he does not say who have but who love. Whence it is eternal damnation that threatens you unworthy bishops, alleges Ludolph in the name of Christ. When clerics counter with the words of Paul, "He who desires the episcopate desires a good thing" (I Tim. 3:1), Ludolph replies that it can also be said that he who steals gold steals a good thing. But to steal is bad, and to desire is also bad. And hence it is evident "from the words of Christ and from other scriptures that the ambitious man is not in the state of grace and salvation."

The remaining six evils are similarly denounced by the authority of Christ: They are the well-known charges of nepotism, worldliness of the persons elected, plurality of benefices, absentee proprietorship, preying upon the poor of the churches, and inquisitiveness of the clerics. The fundamental defect, however, is love of ambition and the desire for luxury. The roots of these evils are threefold, as listed in the Scriptures—lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the vain glory of life (I John 2:16).

Ludolph's ideal for personal religious living is expressed in a more kindly temper, but is no less rigid in its demands. These are reiterated again and again throughout the *Vita*, but they are conveniently epitomized in the twelfth chapter of Part II under the caption, "Twelve Counsels of Perfection Based on Gospel Teaching." The first is the demand for absolute poverty. He who would be perfect must go sell all that he has and follow Christ; he who does not renounce all that he possesses cannot be a disciple. Second, is the necessity of obedience. He who would follow Christ must practice absolute self-denial. The third requirement is that of perfect chastity; one must become a eunuch for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. Charity also must be practiced, even to the extent of loving one's enemies as one's self. The fifth counsel of perfection is the demand for kindliness; when smitten on one cheek the other is to be offered to the adversary. In the sixth place comes the necessity of never denying a request, even though one must sell all his possessions to satisfy the demand. It is necessary to be generous even in the face of one's own extreme necessities. The seventh is the requirement of simplicity in words—let your yea be yea and your nay, nay. Eighth, one must avoid even the appearance of evil—if the eye offends pluck it out, and cut off the hand prone to sin. Rectitude of intention and simplicity of activity are also essential, that one's light may shine undimmed in the presence of men. Absolute agreement between one's conduct and one's teaching is similarly required for perfection. Absence of solicitude amid the uncertainties of life is still another requisite; and, finally, reproval of the brethren is the inescapable duty of one who would follow truly in the footsteps of the Master.

That Ludolph's book displays many fantastic and ephemeral traits is perfectly apparent. But its significance is, nevertheless, very great in certain important respects. In transferring attention from stress on dogmatic postulates to interest in the historical figure of Jesus there was a tremendous gain, even though as yet there was no perception of the essential contrasts between the Christ of faith and the Jesus of history. But perhaps even more significant was the pronounced disposition to find new values for everyday religion in the life and teaching of Christianity's founder. And the values that Ludolph discovered, while phrased in the imagery of a simple-minded medieval piety, are not always utterly unworthy of even a sophisticated twentieth century's respect. There is still food for reflection in such terse remarks as "through Christ's example recognize that you can live right, through his commandments learn to live right, and through his promises will to live right." And Ludolph's declaration that the exercise of love should be the distinguishing mark of the religion that claims loyalty to Jesus reveals the depth of the monk's spiritual insight, even though phrased in the military imagery of medieval chivalry. He who would belong to the army of Christ must be enrolled under the banner of love. It is love that in the last analysis distinguishes the sons of God from the sons of Satan. Without this every other possession is useless. But if you have naught else, but have this alone, you have fulfilled the law.

Imitation of Christ, as expounded by Ludolph and the preachers of his age, was a widely heralded and devoutly cultivated ideal. It kept alive certain aspects of the earthly career of Jesus depicted in the gospels, without in the least antagonizing current dogmatic affirmations regarding the Trinity or the incarnation. As a method of introducing into the practical Christian life of the day a profitable type of conduct it undoubtedly rendered a highly valuable service. One gazed upon the human face of Jesus through which shone the very love of God himself. The devotee adored Christ's thorn-bruised brow but did not allow the cross to detract from his superhuman power. Indeed, so vividly was the genuineness of his humanity depicted that no inconsistency was felt in requiring mortals themselves to walk in his footsteps. Herein lay the great practical value of the medieval pietist's procedure. Today, however, one does not need to be told that as a means of returning to the real Jesus of Palestine the method was entirely futile.

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On the contrary it is essential.

Both the scholastic theologians and the medieval pietists, in their treatments of Jesus, have remained in good standing within the Roman Catholic church throughout the centuries. They differ from each other in procedure and practice rather than in fundamental positions that might endanger orthodoxy. The problems that were in debate in the great councils are not vital points of controversy between them. Neither group is concerned with a literal interpretation of the gospels, after the manner of the ancient school of Antioch, and therefore no problem regarding the incarnation arises. Nor is the question of Jesus' position in the godhead given any new treatment. The pietists reaffirm, with the same ardor as do the Schoolmen, the various items of traditional dogma. Trinitarian doctrine, the complete presence of both God and man in Jesus, Virgin birth, miracle display, atonement, sacramental rites, ecclesiastical authority, and other items of Catholic faith are never called in question.

Such, in general, was the total result of Catholic interest in Jesus in the Western church. The God-man was honored, revered, and loved; but he was not the lowly Jesus of the gospels as a whole, and much less the Jesus of any of their constituent parts. Rather, he was the Lord Jesus Christ of the creeds, humanized, one may say, by the popular devotion of medieval piety. But it must be evident to even the most casual observer that this Roman Catholic Jesus has been tremendously influential in shaping the history of Christianity. Nor has this influence been by any means confined within the Catholic church. How heavily their own thinking about Jesus has been freighted with the traditional impedimenta of both medieval piety and Catholic theology is not always appreciated by Protestants, even in modern times.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

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THE JESUS OF PROTESTANTISM

BOTH the practical and the dogmatic types of Catholic interest in Jesus passed over into Protestantism. But in contrast with the fluid imagery that had displayed itself in medieval Catholicism, Protestantism at the start showed a marked disposition to narrow and harden the earlier portraiture.

In the first place, by elevating the authority of the Bible above that of the papacy Protestants naturally magnified the importance of a canon of Scripture. In conformity with this principle it was necessary rigidly to exclude from the picture of Jesus all apocryphal legends. Those elaborate decorations of his image that had been wrought by the free play of artistic fancy had now to be cleared away in the interests of New Testament simplicity. Yet in truth it must be said that the actual practice of Protestantism was scarcely so rigid as the logical application of the canonical principle would have required. While apocryphal fancies were pronounced "mere folly," Protestant biographers readily learned how to enlarge in their own way upon the materials of the New Testament gospels.

But the Canon had been closed centuries before.

A second characteristic of Protestantism was a certain hardening of Jesus' features in consequence of his being made pre-eminently an object of faith. That faith in Christ had a genuinely emotional content for Luther is perfectly apparent, and the presence in him of a strong mystical strain cannot be denied.[1] But that elasticity of imagery which had displayed itself so freely in Catholicism was now no longer possible in anything like the same degree that it had been present in St. Bernard, St. Francis, Ludolph of Saxony, or Thomas à Kempis. The Christ who stirs Luther's emotions is a figure modeled more rigidly in accordance with dogmatic formulations. He is not that kaleidoscopic person-age which Catholic fancy so readily painted, but is the Christ of the gospels who under the restraint of scriptural canonicity has either to be discovered in the New Testament or to be read into it by force of interpretation. And however vigorously the reformers might insist that salvation was immediately conditioned on faith in Christ, its formal statement involved a substantial measure of doctrinal elaboration.

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[1] In recent years the antecedents of Luther's thinking and experience have been much discussed, particularly in Germany. How far his heritage was scholastic, on the one hand, or a perpetuation of the interests represented by the older German mystics, on the other, is not always easy to decide. For the early development of Luther, and the formation of his Christological opinions in particular, one may consult K. Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte* (Tübingen, 1921), Vol. I; H. Boehmer, *Der junge Luther* (Gotha, 1925); E. Vogelsang, *Die Anfänge von Luthers Christologie* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1929); H. Strohl, *L'évolution religieuse de Luther jusqu'en 1515* (Strasbourg, 1922) and *L'épanouissement de la pensée religieuse de Luther de 1515 à 1520* (Strasbourg, 1924); C. Stange, "Die Person Jesu Christi in der Theologie Luthers," *Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie*, VI (1928), 449–83; F. Huck, "Die Entwicklung der Christologie Luthers von der Psalmen- zur Römervorlesung," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, CII (1930), 61–142; A. Bigelmair, "Zum Verhältnis Luthers zur deutschen Mystik," *Luther in okumenischer Sicht*, ed. A. von Martin (Stuttgart, 1929), pp. 239–52.

If the Jesus of early Protestantism is a less kaleidoscopic individual than the Jesus of medieval Catholicism, he is at the same time commonly supposed to be a truer Jesus of gospel history. It is customary to say that with Luther the historical Christ became the center of Christianity. This statement certainly is true if by it one means to affirm that Luther would direct his gaze back to a specific figure of the past. It is also true if applied to his method of treating the popular Catholic piety of his day, in which images and other intermediaries served as grounds of religious assurance. No swooning mysticism and no adoration of a crucifix, but a return of the human spirit in faith to the life, death, and triumph of the historical Christ constituted for Luther genuine religion. This simple faith may be epitomized in a sentence from the Augsburg Confession: "He was truly born, suffered and died that he might reconcile the Father to us and be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men." This is the quintessence of the Protestant gospel and reveals clearly the type of Jesus with whom the reformers were fundamentally concerned. Moreover, the savior who makes possible the atonement, although a genuinely historical figure, is also the fullest possible manifestation of God in human flesh. Luther had affirmed outright that he knew no God apart from Christ, the very Christ of flesh who lay in the bosom of the Virgin Mary, and he warned his contemporaries that if they would comprehend God aright and find true salvation in him they would not seek him elsewhere than in the Lord Christ.

It is not without importance for historical interests that the reformers stressed the notion of Jesus' manhood rather than his place in the godhead. In this, as might be expected, they showed themselves heirs of the West rather than of the East. Not by first attacking the metaphysical question did the reformers think to make clear that Jesus was a genuine savior. On the contrary, his saving significance was believed to be exhibited more truly in what was called his "offices" and "benefactions." According to Melanchthon, "to know Christ is to know his benefactions, not, as the Scholastic theologians say, to ponder his natures and the modes of his incarnation." And Luther declared that his very soul abhorred that well-known catchword "homoousion." In Scripture he found the beginnings of that wisdom which introduced one to Christ as a man, but presently revealed him to be Lord over all creatures and very God. Scripture, not speculation and dialectic, led to truth. "The philosophers and doctors," wrote Luther, "have insisted on beginning from above, and so they have become fools; we begin from below, and after that come upward." The proper procedure was to start with Scripture and mount upward from the man Jesus to the God Jesus and finally to God himself. In reality the key to both God and Scripture, according to Luther, was to be found in the man Christ Jesus.

Momentarily it might seem as if the real Jesus of history was about to be relieved of those speculative adornments that had for centuries obscured and incumbered his human activities. But the day when this could be accomplished was still a long way off. Luther and his associates did not find the doctrines of the Trinity and the incarnation, as expounded in the ancient creeds, disagreeable to their tastes. Rather, they believed so firmly in the validity of traditional dogma that they resented its scholastic defense as a debasement of the truth. To count the bones and arms of Jesus and mix his natures together is, nothing but "sophistical" knowledge for Luther, yet he affirms that if he saw in Christ only a man who had been crucified he would not find therein any salvation. He has so many experiences of the divinity of Christ that he feels impelled to affirm that "either there is no God, or he is God." Later, Ritschlians said that Christ has the value of God for us, but Luther seems to believe that Christ actually is God for us.

When the need arose for dialectics and speculation in the service of the reformers' cause, they showed a skill and aptitude in this sphere that seem somewhat out of harmony with their criticism of their Catholic predecessors. Even among themselves they soon found occasion to philosophize and dispute. What was the character of Christ's presence in the Eucharist? Was he there by "the contemplation of faith," or in actual presence? Over this abstruse problem emotions ran high, and did not tend so much to fix one's thoughts and affections upon the earthly Jesus as upon a sacramental rite of the new ecclesiastical institution. This was the same sort of circumstance that centuries before had deflected the attention of Christians from the historical Jesus to the person of the Christological redeemer. Protestants soon proved quite as susceptible as the Schoolmen had been to the lure of disputation. While they retained the characteristic Protestant reverence for Scripture, they sometimes forced it rather violently into the service of their dialectic, and the farther this process developed the less likelihood was there that the figure of the historical Jesus would emerge with any measure of clearness on the horizon of early Protestantism. Both Lutherans and Calvinists were more concerned to discuss whether the finite was capable or incapable of furnishing a fit tabernacle for the infinite than they were to recover the portrait of the human Jesus. Their allegiance to Scripture only meant that it was to be quarried as a mine for proof-texts in support of one or another Christology.

While Lutherans were disposed to stress Christ's divine majesty and Calvinists to emphasize his divine humility, as displayed in the incarnation, both branches of Protestantism remained loyal to ancient creedal pronouncements about Jesus. Calvin's confession of faith contains this explicit statement:

> On all the articles which have been decided by ancient councils, touching the infinite spiritual essence of God, and the distinction of the three persons, and the union of the two natures of our Lord Jesus Christ, we receive and agree in all that was therein resolved, as being drawn from the Holy Scriptures, on which alone our faith should be founded, as there is no other witness proper and competent to decide what the majesty of God is but God himself. . . . . We detest all the heresies which were of old condemned.[1]

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[1] *Tracts*, II, 141, as translated by Beveridge.

The Calvinists, by exalting God and humbling Christ, were not in reality drawing any nearer to the human Jesus. While his full manhood was formally asserted, he was above all else a self-humiliated God with the divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence all still lurking in the penumbra of his consciousness.

Protestantism in both of its branches soon crystallized into a system of authority no less rigid than that of the older Catholicism. Its portraiture of Jesus had to be shaped to order. While Protestants had no papal authority to which to appeal, they were agreed to the acceptance of Scripture as a body of revealed truth, divinely inspired in both its thought and its language. At a relatively early date a second authority assumed a recognized place beside the Scriptures. This was an elaborately worked-out system of Protestant dogma, which theoretically was adduced strictly from the Bible but which in reality was quite as much an expression of contemporary interests and ideas as was the older corpus of Catholic dogma.

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By the close of the seventeenth century Protestantism itself was sadly in need of a new reformation. It was no longer the pressure of an ecclesiastical system like that of the papacy from which release was needed, but many persons intellectually inclined were coming to feel uncomfortably oppressed by the enforced dogma of an infallible

Scripture and the hampering effect of that thoroughgoing supernaturalism that Protestantism had taken over from antiquity. These inheritances rested heavily upon the awakening human spirit. Lutheranism still contained in itself enough of its original spiritual vitality to produce that revival of religion called Pietism, but the movement stressed not so much liberty for the human mind to think according to the dictates of reason as the cultivation of the devotional attitude in Christian living. Nevertheless it constituted a real protest against that creed-bound, sacramentarian institution into which the orthodox Lutheran church had been growing. The new emphasis on piety as a personal conquest in religious endeavor, together with its disposition to return to the Bible, was not without significance for subsequent developments. But more powerful forces of liberation had to find expression before biographers of Jesus would be permitted, or even stimulated, to undertake their work in a genuinely historical spirit.

When Protestantism originally affirmed its fundamental principle to be faith in a historical Christ worthy of man's confidence, not because one had previously demonstrated by philosophical argument that this individual possessed a divine nature, but because one had witnessed in his life upon earth an effective display of divine grace, one might suppose that the immediate result would have been a great awakening of interest in careful historical research into the career of Jesus. But such was not the case. Over two centuries were yet to elapse before Protestant interest in the New Testament Christ was to express itself in the form of a genuinely historical quest for Jesus and his teaching. Critical research was not in reality of the genius of Protestantism, any more than it had been of Catholicism. When it finally emerged, it found a more congenial reception within certain Protestant circles, but its actual beginnings have to be sought in regions quite beyond the borders of either of the two great branches of Christendom.

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In the late seventeenth and during the eighteenth centuries Western Europe was experiencing an ever increasing awakening of the human mind. It is unnecessary in the present connection to offer a detailed account of that period of intellectual ferment preceding the dawn of the new day that New Testament study experienced soon after the opening of the nineteenth century. The story begins with that liberal tendency of thinking in England commonly called Deism. For a hundred years and more after the middle of the seventeenth century representatives of this movement continued to wage their battle royal for the rights of reason in the field of religion. They saw in the human mind and in natural law about them the safest guide to a knowledge of the true God and an understanding of Christianity as the true religion. Theirs was a new scholasticism claiming authority for "natural reason," but divorced from the authority of the church.

In France the contemporary movement of the so-called Encyclopedists concerned itself less extensively with religious issues. It was in Germany that the new tendency toward freedom of thinking was to yield its most abundant fruit. Although the Germans were later than the English or the French in espousing the cause of the new intellectualism, it is to them that the principal credit must be given for working out its most consistent application in the field of religion. The effects of the Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*), as the movement is called in Germany, were ultimately tempered somewhat by German pietism, and the outcome was a vigorous interest in the study of the Bible. In the course of time the career of Jesus naturally became the storm center of this new critical interest.

The application of the new knowledge to the study of Jesus and the gospels found its first conspicuous German representative in Lessing. Starting with the axiom that all truth is of one piece and is consistent with the highest enlightenment of the human mind, he affirmed that no traditions handed down from the past could be made true by any such artificial device as a scriptural canon. If true the tradition must already possess within itself the inner quality of truth. Of Christianity he would say that it is not true simply because the evangelists and the apostles taught it, but rather that they taught it because it is true, and the degree of truthfulness in the Christian records is in the last analysis to be judged by the enlightened human reason. Lessing would reject all crass supernaturalism and make genuine religion an affair of the spirit. Man is not the slave of creeds, but religion exists to serve his spiritual life. In its ultimate meaning religion is not derived from historical incidents recorded in books nor is it established by arguments of theologians. It concerns the spirit rather than the letter: "What has the Christian to do with the hypotheses, the explanations, the proofs of the theologians? The letter is not the spirit and the Bible is not religion."[1]

Lessing carries his notion of the naturalness of religion directly into the life and work of Jesus. He distinguishes sharply between Jesus the individual who lived his own religious career and the Jesus whom Christians made the object of their reverence. The utterance of Lessing is so explicit that he may be allowed to speak for himself:

> Whether Christ was more than a man is a problem. That he was true man, if he was man at all, and that he never ceased to be man, is certain. Consequently the

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[1] *Sämtliche Werke*, X, 14.

religion of Christ and the Christian religion are two quite different things. The former, the religion of Christ, is that religion which he as a man himself knew and practiced, which every man can have in common with him and which every man must so much the more desire to have in common with him as the character of the man Christ is made the more lofty and lovable. The latter, the Christian religion, is that religion which maintains that he was more than a man and as such even makes him the object of its worship. How both of these religions, the religion of Christ as well as the Christian religion, can exist in Christ as in one and the same person is inconceivable.[1]

are antiquated already.

Nothing that Lessing himself wrote was as disturbing or as far reaching in its implications as was the posthumous treatise of Reimarus, which Lessing took the responsibility of bringing to public attention in the year 1778. The treatise was entitled *Concerning the Purpose of Jesus and His Disciples.* It offered a thoroughgoing naturalistic interpretation of the career and teaching of Jesus. Not the canonized gospels, but the contemporary life and thinking of Jesus' day, constitute the point of departure for Reimarus. He would abandon traditional Christology with its emphasis on the supernatural, and would read the story of Jesus' life strictly in the light of the Palestinian history of his age. He found that Jesus had put himself forward as a candidate for the messiahship, in the belief that the people would flock to his standard seeking deliverance from the yoke of the Romans. It was no part of Jesus' intention, according to Reimarus, to found a new religion for the benefit of the gentile world. That had been the distinctive accomplishment of his disciples who introduced the apocalyptic expectations of Judaism into the interpretation of their hero and thus launched a new missionary propaganda.

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[1] *Ibid.*, XVIII, 284.

At first sight one is struck by the seeming modernness of Reimarus. It is an interesting fact that he riveted his gaze upon a definite period of the past in true historical fashion. In this respect he was, from a scientific point of view, much in advance of his younger contemporary Lessing. Yet even Reimarus was still a long way from the attitude of one who would approach history unaffected by contemporary doctrinal issues and equipped with a competent technique for the handling of the sources. Much preliminary work had yet to be done in the way of creating the historical attitude of mind and in devising a machinery of criticism that could carry one safely back through the ages to the early days of the Christian movement's history. Before there could be any general awakening of interest in critical historical research men's minds had to be more effectively liberated from bondage to dogma and supernaturalism.

Kant and Hegel embodied most effectively the new intellectual yearning of this period. The former honored the rights of reason, cherished an appreciation of ethical values, and worked out a system of philosophy that not only retained but indeed required belief in a transcendental God. By Hegel this transcendentalism was elaborated into a complete philosophy of religion, which made possible a new approach to the problem of Jesus and his significance. Neither Kant nor Hegel themselves followed up the implications of their philosophy for New Testament study, but the elements in their systems of thinking that were later appropriated by Jesus' biographers have continued to play a major rôle even down to the present time.

The older intellectualism, when applied to interpretation of Jesus, took as its point of departure an explicit denial of the validity of all Christological speculation that depended for its justification on the supernatural authority of the Scripture and on the dogmatic definition of the person of Christ. It worshiped only at the feet of the goddess of reason. A typical rationalistic life of Jesus, such as that written by Paulus in 1822, was primarily concerned to show that the miraculous elements in the gospels had no justification in fact. These marvelous incidents had originally been purely natural events misunderstood by the disciples who had reported them as miraculous occurrences. Jesus had displayed in his life and teaching a godlike character that might well call forth the admiration of men, but his claim to distinction resided in the perfection of his humanity and not in any declaration regarding his participation in the nature of Deity.

Fron Kant and Hegel religion derived a way of thinking that could maintain a self-respecting intellectualism and at the same time establish a closer link between God and humanity than had previously been possible in philosophical circles. Neither Kant nor Hegel could have called Jesus the Son of God in a metaphysical sense as understood by the orthodox theologians of their day. But the Kantian emphasis upon the transcendental character of the ethical ideal made possible the conception of a moral unity between the human and the divine quite apart from any theological dogma regarding incarnation. The Hegelian idealism still further fortified this conception. The finite spirit in man is in the last analysis only a concrete expression of the infinite spirit, and thus the whole course of history in the evolution of human experience is in reality but a process of God's self-realization. Behind and above all human reason is the absolute reason of which the former is only a more or less imperfect expression. Truth is not a matter of accidental and occasional revelation recorded in a sacred literature, but has an ideal existence of eternal and universal validity in which accidental revelations participate, and they are valid revelations only in so far as they do thus participate in the nature of the absolute. Thus there is the possibility of a genuine unity between God and man in the realm of rational and moral life.

This lingo of the philosophers may be difficult of comprehension for the matter-of-fact historian. But it produced a state of mind that proved to be of great service to Protestantism in coping with the problem of the new intellectualism. The type of thinking that Kant and Hegel had inspired made possible a cultivation of historical interests that probably never could have been realized on the basis of the naturalistic rationalism of earlier times. It now seemed possible to clothe old truth in a new language that would conserve, if not indeed heighten, its meaning. It was no longer necessary to defend the metaphysical dogma of the Trinity or the traditional miracle of the Virgin Birth or the theory of scriptural infallibility, in order to justify one's thought of Jesus' uniqueness. History could now be read in the light of moral and spiritual idealism which made it possible to maintain the uniqueness of Jesus on the ground that in his person was to be found the ideal embodiment of that principle of universal morality propounded by the philosophers. In him, to an unusual degree, the infinite spirit had manifested itself in concrete finite form.

When moral character and spiritual ideals came to be more widely employed as criteria for judging the worth of Jesus, it was easier to surmount those formidable barriers of scriptural inspiration and literal supernaturalism that had heretofore blocked the way of historical research. Metaphysical tests of Jesus' deity could now be supplanted by moral and spiritual tests, and one who resorted to this method might more easily persuade himself, if not his audience, that he was not flying violently into the face of traditional Christological dogma.

Working in this area of thought Strauss could dismiss from the story of the gospels all miracles as the product of mythical fancy and still retain the image of a Jesus who seemed to him to be far more significant for religion than was the traditional God-man of earlier Protestantism. Critics who revile Strauss have often done so from the platform of complete ignorance regarding his book and the area of interest and thought which he represented. He saw in the historical personality of Jesus a concrete realization of the infinite in the finite, the true manifestation of God-manhood. To realize God in finite manhood is humanity's highest goal. While Jesus thus cannot be thought of as the only individual of whom God-manhood is possible, yet its realization by him is arresting and inspiring. But Strauss's concern to eliminate the miraculous was so thoroughgoing that even he himself hardly appreciated the constructive significance of the principle on which he worked.

In certain circles of religious interest this rigid absolutist philosophy was somewhat mellowed under the warmth of pietistic tendencies, which presently made its application to Jesus more acceptable. Already Schleiermacher had led in a pietistic type of return to Jesus, in whom the divine was seen through the God-consciousness displayed in his life. Not the qualifications of formal Christological dogma gave him significance, but the perfect union of ideal personality with a historical individual. It is the holiness and sinlessness of Jesus, these qualities being demonstrated in his historical career, that make him the true mediator between God and man. The direction in which this type of interest leads, once its logical implications are recognized, is away from a formally defined Christological dogma to a contemplation of the work and character of the historical Christ.

This growing tendency toward historical-mindedness came to fuller expression in the Ritschlian school of theology. The original Protestant emphasis on the centrality of the historical Christ is now applied in the area of immediate experience.

As the Ritschlians expressed it, since Jesus has the value of God for us in the area of our own religious experience, there is no further need for metaphysical argument, and the more one dwells upon the grace manifested in the life and teachings of Jesus, the clearer becomes one's conviction regarding his unique mission and character. Thus Christological dogma is not sacrificed, but history becomes its foundation. Yet one does not have to wait upon critical research to discover that Jesus has for us the value of God. The simple gospel picture as it stands furnishes the believer that experience of Jesus' grace which is convincing evidence of his godhead. This interpretation justifies an interest in history, even though it leaves but slight room for the free play of historical investigation. Its greatest significance for the historian lies in the vigor with which it maintains that the value of the historical Jesus was otherwise conditioned than by the postulate of scriptural canonicity and a metaphysical definition of the person of the godhead.

The later development of Ritschlianism exhibits an increasing concern with history. Ritschl himself could hardly have thought it necessary to write a life of Christ from critical scrutiny of the gospels in order to determine the content of Christology. For him immediate experience was quite enough, and in fact he thought that some persons who were busy with the task of studying the career of the historical Jesus were deliberately attempting "the subversion of Jesus' religious importance."[1] But later Ritschlians are among the most earnest historical students of the gospels, where they deliberately seek support for their theory of Jesus' unique experiential value for men. They have become less and less interested in the formal dogmatic phrases and see in Jesus little more than the model religious man. Yet their interest in history never frees itself from a concern to demonstrate that Jesus had in one form or another unique God-value for humanity. In the words of one of their later representatives:

> That which remains for us as our joy and comfort, our immediate and present possession, is what he was on earth and what he brought us—the blessed presence of God and his saving love which is destined to expand in ever widening circles. To us men on earth he brought the Father in heaven and gave us courage and joy in brotherly love. All these blessings in increasing measure stream forth ceaselessly from him, uniting men with their God and with one another, immediately they themselves are won by Jesus.[2]

While later Ritschlians, like Harnack and Wernle, retain a minimum of Christological interest, their concern to find unique values in Jesus is never absent from the pages of their books. The fact that they have transferred supernaturalism into the strictly moral and spiritual sphere has added greatly to the popularity of their works in those circles of thinking where the crasser imagery of traditional Christology has become offensive. The relief which they brought to minds that had previously been embarrassed by the older views about Jesus has been so greatly appreciated that the dual strain in their own presentation has sometimes escaped attention. Entirely apart from the question of the propriety of their procedure, one should not fail to recognize that they have two very lively concerns. One is a determination to recover an accurate historical picture of Jesus, and the other is a desire to pronounce a judgment of values regarding the significance of his personality and work for the religion of men today. Without at all denying the justice of the latter interest, it is very necessary to observe that no one of their books should be treated as though its author were solely concerned with historical interests. It must be remembered that in their reading of history they aim to find fortiori Case! proof for a certain type of religious conviction, and the fact that they are always able to arrive at this desired goal is something of which their critical readers should not fail to take cognizance.

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[1] *Justification and Reconciliation*, p. 3.

[2] P. Wernle, *Jesus* (Tübingen, 1916), p. 368.

Parallel with this growth of historical-mindedness, a new interest in the study of the New Testament literature had been gradually emerging, and increasing in intensity, since the early decades of the nineteenth century. This line of investigation was ultimately to prove of immense importance for Protestantism's thought of Jesus. Gradually the doctrine of scriptural infallibility gave way before an advancing scholarship which questioned the verbal accuracy of the current rendering, and demanded a reconstruction of the original document in the light of all the evidence available for the earliest possible Greek text. Indeed, it was still possible to maintain that once this original had been recovered, the quality of infallibility might attach to it, or at least to the unrecovered autograph. At the same time, if the outposts of scriptural infallibility had thus been found not entirely impregnable, sooner or later a vigorous attack was quite sure to be made upon the very citadel itself. Some scholar would inevitably ask whether even the original Greek text of a particular book did accurately report the real facts regarding the life and work of Jesus.

The exact circumstances in the history of Christianity under which the written gospels had been produced was already an old question, but while the doctrine of scriptural infallibility prevailed, orthodox Protestantism had a ready answer. It coincided in all essentials with the solution of this problem that had been proposed by Irenaeus as long ago as the second century. The power of heaven had superintended the composition of Scripture and no further explanation was necessary or permissible. But when the Hegelian way of thinking opened up the possibility of picturing divine action in less arbitrary fashion, a new answer was soon forthcoming. That school of interpreters who came to bear the designation "Tübingen" applied its energies to describing in a less arbitrary way the manner in which the history of early Christianity had developed. These scholars convinced many people that in order to understand the rise of the Christian literature it was necessary to appreciate the struggles and successive stages in the development of the Christian movement itself. And this would be the story of how the infinite had come to expression in the finite.

While the Tübingen scholars themselves never made any significant contribution toward the literary problem of gospel origins, their study of the Pauline epistles stimulated an activity that later bore fruit in the gospel field. Even before the middle of the century significant work had been done to show that the four gospels were not independent literary compositions, but that, so far as the first three at any rate are concerned, Mark had been extensively used in the composition of the other two. By the year 1863 the two-document solution of the synoptic problem, so familiar to scholars today, had been put forth in practically its present form. Mark and the Logia were designated as the two primal units of an earlier written tradition reproduced independently in Matthew and in Luke.

The difference in character between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptics was also a fact already well known, but the distinctiveness of John had not caused biographers of Jesus any serious difficulty. They readily assumed that it had been written to supplement the other three gospels, and that the task of the modern biographer was simply to weave together in a harmonious whole all four of the gospels. Those scholars who had raised their voices in protest on the ground that it was impossible to harmonize John with the Synoptics were given little or no heed in Protestant circles before the time of Strauss. But with the new interest in literary criticism that followed upon his work, the distinctiveness of John became a generally recognized fact. Just how this divergent book should be handled in composing a life of Christ was a question not easily settled, but the recognition of the problem itself marked a distinct advance in historical method.

Still another phase of literary study to have an important bearing upon Protestant interpretation of Jesus was investigation of the books of later Judaism. Protestants had always used the Old Testament freely as a body of prophetic proof-text to shed light upon the life and work of Jesus. That anything of importance was to be learned from the books of the Old Testament Apocrypha hardly seemed possible, in view of the fact that these documents lacked full canonical authority. But with the more general abandonment of the canonical norm, a freer use could be made of the later Jewish books. Not only the Apocrypha, but still other writings that had survived from the history of late Judaism, were perused. Here one found a whole series of interests and ideas that were now for the first time seen to be part of the Judaism of Jesus' day, and when the story of his life was read in the light of these new findings, sometimes the results proved to be rather startling.

The latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of some distinctly new types of life of Jesus written by Protestants as a more or less direct result of the new lines of literary research just described. Writers now appeared who would select one or another phase of the literature to guide them in their reconstructed picture of Jesus. The Logia, that collection of Jesus' sayings which Matthew and Luke had used in addition to Mark, was fixed upon by many biographers as the standard type of representation about which other materials were to be gathered. The Ritschlian Christology came to ready terms with this document, in which Jesus' teachings appeared with emphasis on the moral and spiritual. And a life of Jesus built upon the assumption that this document was virtually simon-pure history found little difficulty in presenting his figure in terms of ethical idealism. The features of Jesus' career brought into boldest relief were his ideal life lived in conscious fellowship with God his Father, and the message which he delivered stressing the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

When a would-be biographer of Jesus fixed his gaze more specifically on Mark, he was led to emphasize other characteristics. There he discovered Jesus talking less about the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of men than about a Kingdom of God to be established by the Son of Man who would come in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. When this language was read side by side with similar imagery standing in later Jewish books, such as Enoch, Baruch, and IV Ezra, a different sort of historical Jesus began to take shape in the biographer's imagination. Jesus had been a visionary preacher who put himself forth among the Jews as a candidate for messianic honors, messiahship being understood in the vivid apocalyptic fashion of later Jewish thinking. Jesus was assumed to have been much concerned about the events to attend the destruction of a present evil age, and the inauguration of a new era by the sudden intervention of God. Thus arose the eschatological type of life of Jesus, which has been so widely in vogue among modern scholars since the nineties of the last century.

These various lines of study, mingling in different ways, lent great variety to books about Jesus that appeared during the closing years of the nineteenth century and the opening decades of the twentieth. Earlier types of interest sometimes lingered on in greater or lesser degree, combined with one or more of the newer lines of research. Most complete was the break with the older canonical norm for determining the reliability of tradition. Whenever a free method of research was at all recognized, the necessity for gospel criticism was admitted. But there were differences of opinion as to the length to which such criticism should go. In some circles it seemed almost as if a kind of new canon was established, which required one to accept a statement because it stood in the Logia or in Mark. Often the results of literary criticism applied to the synoptic problem were tacitly elevated into a new scriptural canon.

Another general characteristic of the new type of life of Jesus was a distinct tendency to subordinate the Gospel of John to the Synoptics. No biographer who made any pretensions whatever that his work conformed to the methods of modern criticism ventured to make extensive use of John, and commonly he felt himself entirely justified in ignoring it altogether. The principal justification offered for this procedure was the wide difference in character between the content of John and that of the Synoptics. Since the primary elements in the latter, the Logia and Mark, were treated as a kind of new gospel, John suffered by contrast and was virtually assigned to the discarded group of apocryphal books. Critical Protestant lives of Jesus now became virtually synoptic lives, and indeed Logia-Markan lives, with the dominant emphasis either on Mark or on the Logia according to the individual taste of an author.

Occasionally one met with books that emphasized one or another special aspect of Jesus' thought or teaching. A subject to engage particular attention was the problem of his self-interpretation, the so-called "messianic consciousness." Even in the Synoptics there was room for differences of opinion as to what Jesus believed on this subject. It was easy, when reading the Logia, to come to the conclusion that he had interpreted his messiahship to his contemporaries in an ethical sense. He was a messianic savior because he had brought to them a new knowledge of God to be realized more perfectly in personal living. One might almost say that he was the Ritschlian Messiah to the Jews. Other interpreters who attached more significance to Mark read his psychology in the light of the eschatological hopes contained in the apocalyptic books of later Judaism. Still others would eliminate altogether from his thinking with reference to himself any consideration of the messianic problem.

The Jesus of Protestantism has come to be a widely varying figure in the imagery of his numerous biographers. The older type of book, where interest in the supernatural dominates, is still much in evidence. It proceeds on the assumption that only biblical materials are worthy of consideration as sources of information, and that a document's presence in a canon of Scripture insures the historical accuracy of its contents. The Old Testament renders its chief service in this connection by furnishing prophetic references to the coming of Christ, while the New Testament is the inspired record of his work as savior. In reconstructing the story of his career from the four gospels the proper procedure is a harmonious blending-together of all items in each of the narratives. Where discrepancies or contradictions might at first sight seem to occur, these are to be explained away by skilful interpretation. Metaphysical interests play a large part and doctrinal themes are much in favor. Incarnation, miracles, sinlessness, messiahship, atonement, and similar dogmatic interests are dominant, and the ultimate aim of biographical reconstruction is to exalt the Christ of faith. As in Catholicism so in Protestantism, this is even to the present day a widely demanded type of *Life of Christ.*

Another distinct class of book, very popular still, portrays the human ideality of Jesus. This interest has rarely if ever been more finely expressed than in the language of the oft anathematized Ernest Renan. More than half a century ago he wrote:

> This sublime being who presides over the destiny of the world, we may call divine, not in the sense that Jesus had absorbed all divinity, or has been identical with it, but in the sense that Jesus is he who has caused his fellow men to make the greatest step towards the divine. Mankind in its totality offers to view an assemblage of low and egoistic beings only superior to the animal in that their selfishness is more reflective. But from the midst of this uniform vulgarity there are columns rising toward heaven and bearing witness to a nobler destiny. Jesus is the highest of these columns which show to man whence he comes and whither he must go. . . . . His worship will constantly renew its youth, the story of his life will bring ceaseless tears, his sufferings will soften the best hearts, all the ages will proclaim that amongst the sons of men none has been born who is greater than Jesus.

Both the doctrinal and the practical types of Protestant interest in Jesus were lineally descended from Catholicism, of which the Protestant variations were only specific readjustments to the new environment. But distinctive of Protestantism was that third class of book whose author clearly recognized the fundamental importance of a critical scrutiny of the gospels as the only way of approach to the recovery of a true picture of Jesus. Yet within this group itself there was still a confusing variety of results due to the fact that some authors leaned mainly on the Logia while others placed chief store by Mark. At the close of the nineteenth century Protestant scholars had not yet succeeded in establishing anything like a consensus of opinion as to whether the ethical elements of the Logia or the eschatological features of Mark furnished the proper colors with which to paint the true picture of the earthly Jesus.[1]

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[1] For a description of this literary output one may consult H. Weinel and A. G. Widgery, *Jesus in the Nineteenth Century and After* (Edinburgh, 1914); A. Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London, 1910), considerably enlarged in the second German edition, *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (Tübingen, 1913); J. Leipoldt, *Vom Jesusbilde der Gegenwart* (Leipzig, 1925).

CHAPTER TWELVE

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MODERN VARIETIES OF BELIEF IN JESUS

THE name of Jesus has been widely exploited in the religious literature of recent times. For a decade or more it has been a barren month indeed that has not witnessed the publication of a new book about him. The total output of the past five years alone would fill several five-foot shelves. Although each writer has been more or less directly concerned to evaluate the worth of Jesus for the religious thought and life of the present generation, there is still a very manifest restlessness among workers in this field. Either consciously or unconsciously they continue to betray a suspicion that the theme has not yet been adequately treated, and the urge toward further discussion shows no immediate signs of abatement.

To the casual observer modern interpretations of Jesus may seem almost multitudinous in their variety, but when submitted to critical analysis they readily group themselves into a few easily recognized types long familiar to students of the subject. The reasons for lack of novelty, notwithstanding the numerous hands that have been wielding the pen, are easily perceived. Almost every author has been intent upon restating in a more forceful and convincing way some current view passed down to him in the tradition of the ecclesiastical group or school to which he belongs. Usually he has made no claim to great originality, nor has he been motivated by a conviction that any essentially new interpretation of Jesus' significance was to be sought or found. The chief task has been to devise new ways of presenting the old truth—to fabricate new receptacles for the old wine. This psychological atmosphere has not nourished a vigorous interest in ascertaining new and heretofore unknown values in the career of Jesus. While one might feel stimulated to chart a new course over troubled theological waters, in the hope of reaching more comfortably some familiar harbor, the possibility of finding a new continent of religious valuations could hardly be imagined. Already the Christological globe had been too frequently encircled, north and south as well as east and west. One's rôle was that of a canny voyager, not that of the venturesome explorer.

The nineteenth century bequeathed to the twentieth an elaborate terminology for use in evaluating the contribution of Jesus to the Christianity of the present. In wide areas of Christendom the language of the ancient creeds was still held to be the fittest expression of opinion regarding the nature and significance of Christianity's heroic founder. His meaning for the religion of mankind today was thought to reside in a belief put forth ages ago affirming him to be both God and man, and as such to be the only adequate mediator between heaven and earth and the effective savior of a lost and sinful humanity. Traditional explanations of how it was possible to think of an individual who had appeared on earth in Palestine centuries ago as very God of very God were still repeated with assurance and reverence in the official pronouncements and popular instruction of many communions. Various theories that had been propounded in the past to describe how deity and man could exist together in the same historical personality continued to be restated, sometimes in new phrases but never in language that reflected upon the propriety of the assumption involved in the major premise. The doctrine of the incarnation was accepted as an indisputable fact. If instead of starting from the conception of Jesus' deity one made his manhood the point of departure, as had been done by a very ancient school of interpretation, it was still felt desirable to seek a worthy estimate of his significance in a line of argument that proved him to be in some fashion the final revelation of the supreme Deity. In this imagery the doctrine of the atonement loomed large in one's estimate of Jesus' worth. Even when saving significance was connected more immediately with the ethical message and moral character of Jesus himself, it was still thought necessary to stress supernaturalism and normativeness in order to insure Jesus' value for present-day religion. No matter how excellently the man Jesus may have lived and taught, adequate appreciation of him seemed impossible unless phrased in the imagery of divine authority and finality. Thus interpreters in the twentieth century have commonly endeavored to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors, so far as concerns their general aim and method of procedure. They have assumed that historical occurrences can have genuine religious worth only when estimated in the currency of some type of metaphysical and supernatural theory.

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There are, however, two heritages from the nineteenth century that are less ancient but equally inescapable. One of these is the critical study of the Bible, now an established procedure in all circles where religion is brought into vital touch with our modern cultural situation. The other heritage is the new scientific temper which we comomonly term the "evolutionary view" of the world and history. No modern writer who deals with the significance of Jesus for people in the twentieth century, and who hopes to win a hearing for his message today, can ignore with impunity either of these interests. While this necessity is well-nigh univer-

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sally conceded, the proposed ways of coming to terms with the situation are various in form and of uncertain validity.

By the beginning of the first decade of the present century the critical study of Scripture and the scientific attitude of mind had found dangerous lodgment even within the precincts of Roman Catholicism. The guardians of ecclesiastical tradition felt the menace to be so great that two important official pronouncements against it were issued in the year 1907. One was the decree of the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition, commonly referred to as the "Syllabus" (*Lamentabili sane exitu*), promulgated on July 4, and the other was the "Encyclical Letter of Pius X" (*Pascendi dominici gregis*) issued on September 8. Both documents were aimed directly at the so-called Modernists, whose interpretation of Scripture and history had begun to manifest itself somewhat conspicuously in the activities of important persons within the church, particularly in France and England.[1]

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[1] P. Sabatier, *Modernism: The Jowett Lectures, 1908* (London, 1908), is a good introduction to the subject from the Protestant point of view; while J. Rivière, *Le modernisme dans l'église* (Paris, 1929), surveys the history of the movement from the Catholic standpoint. See also E. Buonaiuti, *Le modernisme catholique* (Paris, 1927); A. Houtin, *Histoire du modernisme catholique* (Paris, 1913); J. Kübel, *Geschichte des katholischen Modernismus* (Tübingen, 1909); W. L. Sullivan, *Letters to His Holiness Pope Pius X. By a Modernist* (Chi-

Had the development of Roman Catholic modernism not been so violently arrested, undoubtedly it would have produced a detailed interpretation of Jesus in accordance with the findings of gospel criticism and the evolutionary view of history. While religious conviction was thought to rest on faith, and thus to belong in a quite different area of interest, the Modernist refused to regard science and history as studies to be pursued primarily for the purpose of deriving therefrom weapons for the defense of traditional dogmas. The Pope perceived quite correctly that, according to the modernistic temper, God never could properly become a direct object of scientific investigation or a subject of historical research. Hence the credibility of external revelation, which the church boldly defended by its use of what was called the science of "natural theology," was seriously threatened. Especially since the time of Thomas Aquinas it had been customary to affirm that the natural light of

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cago, 1910); A. L. Lilley, *Modernism: A Record and a Review* (New York, 1909); A. J. Loeppert, *Modernism and the Vatican* (New York, 1912); A. Loisy, *Simples reflexions sur le décret du saint-office Lamentabili sane exitu et sur l'encyclique Pascendi Dominici gregis* (Ceffonds près Montier-en-Der, 1908); *The Programme of Modernism: A Reply to the Encyclical of Pius X*, translated from the Italian by G. Tyrrell (New York, 1908); G. Tyrrell, *Medievalism: A Reply to Cardinal Mercier* (London, 1909) and *Christianity at the Crossroads* (London, 1910); *What We Want: An Open Letter to Pius X*, translated from the Italian by A. L. Lilley (London, 1907).

human reason, when properly exercised, was one of dogma's main supports.

In proposing to liberate history and science from subserviency to the tradition of the church, the Modernist made religion essentially a matter of the inner spirit whose operations were ultimately authenticated by the experience of religious individuals. Herein, it was said, lay the secret of the rise and success of that magnificent institution, the Catholic church, for which the Modernist maintained genuine admiration and to which he pledged his sincere loyalty. At the same time he could exemplify a truly critical attitude toward the gospels and a complete freedom from bondage to the doctrine of external authority. He could also believe that Jesus as a historical person had passed through a developing religious experience and that the church's belief about Jesus had also been subject to a like process of growth. That this procedure, if unchecked, would lead to disastrous results was feared by the Pope, who in the early part of his famous encyclical exclaimed: "We shall soon see clearly what, as a consequence of this most absurd teaching, must be held touching the most sacred person of Christ, and the mysteries of his life and death, and of his resurrection and ascension into Heaven."

The Modernists clearly differentiated the "Christ of history" from the "Christ of faith," to use their terminology. They admitted that the gospel narratives had been extensively colored by early Christian belief in the risen Lord. The validity of that faith was not to be called in question, but was to be clearly recognized, and not to be confused with the actual events of history. History was properly concerned only with the earthly Jesus, while the supernatural Christ constituted the proper object of faith. Thus it is the "Christ of faith" who is most real to the religious experience of the believer and most vital to the life of the church. When Jesus had been made the object of doctrinal interpretation, in the interests of apologetic, he became a "Christ of dogma." When pious fancy played with his figure, giving him an idealized historical form, the result was a "Christ of legend." But scientific historical investigation found it necessary to strip Jesus of dogma and of legend in order to return to the human Christ of historical reality, who by word and example supplied to men the ideal of the truly religious life.

Christ had still another function. By the exercise of faith his disciples experienced through him the true Christian salvation and received his spirit, which is the earnest of the genuinely divine life. Thus the "Christ of history" was the author of Christianity's ethical ideals, while the "Christ of faith" was the source of the distinctively Christian experience. In the gospels, accordingly, one distinguished two elements to be carefully differentiated from one another. First, there was the Christ of historical reality whom we may make the object of our critical quest. Then there was the Christ of supernatural reality for the faith of the gospel people. We can know him, not through critical study of the gospels, but by our own immediate exercise of faith. In the gospels these two interests are so thoroughly blended that it is not always possible to distinguish between them with perfect clearness. Faith-truth and historical truth are not to be confused. Yet these two types of truth had been easily confused in ancient times, and in consequence of this fact the gospel-writers often made faith-truth appear as historical truth. The inevitable result was simply legend, or perhaps sometimes theology. Historical truth in these books occurs in different degrees with different writers. The Modernists believed that the element of dependability was to be discovered in largest measure in Mark and least of all in John.

Modernism was suppressed before it had an opportunity to apply its principles of procedure in detail to an extended study of the life and teachings of Jesus. But it is doubtful whether it would ever have made a particularly significant contribution toward a new interpretation of him and his work. While the distinction between the "Christ of faith" and the "Christ of history" made possible a more objective treatment of the gospel materials than had been customary within Roman Catholicism, the significance which the Modernists attached to the supernatural Christ was so prominent that concern with the earthly Jesus for his own sake could hardly have become for them a matter of vital interest. The problem of supernaturalism, essentially an apologetic issue, was not really dismissed but was simply transferred from the field of objective history to the arena of inner experience on the part of the believer. This method of estimating the meaning of Jesus for religion in modern times would undoubtedly have issued in a type of interpretation with which we are today familiar in certain Protestant circles, of which we shall presently speak. And any evaluation that may have been attempted must have phrased itself in some imagery regarding the deity of Christ. By the very presuppositions of the procedure it seems to be assumed that no essential significance for modern religion could possibly be attached to the life and work of the historical Nazarene.

Although it has purged itself of Modernism, the Catholic church has today many writers who concern themselves very diligently with interpretation of Jesus. Their method is uniformly apologetic. They affirm the impossibility of making any distinction between the so-called Jesus of history and the Christ of faith, and they find the significance of Jesus' historical career to consist in the divine authority which he exercised as founder of the church. As Pope Pius X wrote, in refuting the Modernists, "the priesthood was instituted by Christ for the salvation of souls," and thus the value of Jesus for men today resides in his establishment of the divine institution, whose ministry and rites are essential to man's salvation. No objection is taken to critical study of the gospels. On the contrary, there is a vigorous insistence on such study when pursued to confirm the validity of the church's interpretation of Jesus and support confidence in his deity.

The orthodox Catholic interpreter also professes to favor heartily the modern scientific spirit of research. He insists that the more one knows about the natural world the more thoroughly convinced will one become that the God who created and sustains the universe is the deity who has revealed himself in the Roman Catholic church. "Natural theology," as they term it, and scriptural exegesis are declared to be the legitimate tools of orthodox apologetics. G. K. Chesterton has phrased this conviction in a few striking sentences. Speaking of Jesus' appearance on the stage of history, Chesterton declares that "it is nothing less than the loud assertion that this mysterious maker of the world has visited his world in person." Or, again, "I maintain therefore that a man reading the New Testament frankly and freshly would not get the impression of what is now often meant by a human Christ. The merely human Christ is a make-up figure, a piece of artificial selection, like the merely evolutionary man."[1]

In addition to elaborate works of the apologetic type that are at present issuing in rapid succession from the Roman Catholic press, there are still others of a more popular form that give no serious attention to the historical sources of information but allow imagination to play freely about the figure of Jesus. Word-picture images of him are created to nourish piety and satisfy the demands of the mystic temperament. The vivid portrayal of the God-man of medieval artistry, recast in such new forms as the modern occasion may demand, still elicits the admiration and devotion of hosts of Catholics. There is today, undoubtedly, a much wider familiarity with the New Testament books than was the case in medieval times, and perhaps also a less ready disposition to draw without restraint upon the materials of apocryphal legend. But the type of interest still dominant in these circles is not seriously concerned to justify its picture of Jesus by the processes of historical criticism.

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[1] *The Everlasting Man*, "People's Library Edition" (London, 1927), pp. 227, 310.

Two recent and notable exponents of this modern medievalism are the Italian, Giovanni Papini, and the Spaniard, Gabriel Miró. The latter's book, *Figures of the Passion of Our Lord,*[1] exhibits a marvelous recrudescence of the medieval spirit in its deepest craving for objective realism and its almost joyous portrayal of fleshly mortification. In a similar vein Papini,[2] though somewhat more self-conscious than were the medieval artists and aware of his lack of long discipline in the mysteries of theology, approaches Jesus "with simple-heartedness of longing and of love, just as during his lifetime he was approached by the fishermen of Capernaum who were, fortunately for them, even more ignorant than the author." He warns his readers that he has designs upon their feelings. While he professes to hold rigidly to the orthodoxy of the gospel and to the beliefs of the Catholic church, he declares that he has tried "to represent those dogmas and those words in unusual ways in a style violent with contrasts and with foreshortening, colored with crude and vividly felt words, to see if he could startle modern souls used to highly colored error, into seeing the truth." And the significance of the picture which he paints is summed up in his declaration of purpose "to write the life of a God who made himself man."

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[1] Translated from the Spanish by C. J. Hogarth (New York, 1925).

[2] *Life of Christ*, translated from the Italian by Dorothy Canfield Fisher (New York, 1923).

Modern writers who approach the task of interpreting Jesus from a traditional Anglican background are not embarrassed by the decrees of papal authority respecting their treatment of the gospel materials or their legitimate attitude toward modern science. Yet as inheritors of an ancient and well-established tradition, authenticating the creeds and sacraments of their religious institution, they find almost as much difficulty as do their Catholic brethren in coming to terms with the newer thought tendencies and methods of the twentieth century. The Nicene and Chalcedonian creedal formulas occupy in their esteem a position of authority not dissimilar to that which the pope enjoys in Catholicism. The defensibility of the biblical records, as essentially a body of divine revelation, is also a serious obstacle to newer ways of thinking. The main center about which traditional estimates of Jesus' value revolve may be said to be the doctrine of the incarnation, by which the efficacy of the sacraments and the authority of the ministry have been traditionally established. These are treasures of their ecclesiastical inheritance that continue to be highly esteemed.

The attitude of Bishop Gore, in his recent little volume, *Jesus of Nazareth*,[1] is revealing in this connection. He recognizes the futility of portraying simply the Christ of tradition, whether Catholic or Protestant. He concedes that this tradition has "lamentably obscured the real Jesus by letting men half forget his humanity in its zeal for his divinity, and his example and ethical teaching in its zeal for his atoning sacrifice." But he warns his readers that popular tradition is something quite different from the official creed of the church, which in his opinion has safeguarded the true account of Jesus as given by Paul and John. There is no difficulty in perceiving the import of this language. It means, in a word, that the significance of Jesus as set forth in the creed can be thoroughly confirmed by a careful study of the historical records and is not out of harmony with the intellectual outlook and scientific knowledge to which the educated man of the twentieth century feels himself obligated. He need not claim infallibility for the sacred record, but he will feel no hesitation in defending in detail its dependability, even to the extent of accepting as actual fact its entire account of Jesus' teachings as well as his miraculous deeds. Yet our author seems to be aware of the fact that, after all, one arrives at these conclusions, not by processes of historical criticism and scientific observation, but by an inclination to be loyal to the creed. Our judgment will, he remarks, "never be purely a matter of historical criticism. It depends largely on the state of mind of the critic—on whether he does or does not entertain as a credible idea the fundamental thought of God as the redeemer of mankind." This type of interpretation is essentially an apologetic reconstruction and not a product of scientific research.

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[1] New York, 1929. See also Charles Gore, *Belief in Christ* (London, 1922).

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Similarly, Bishop Headlam, in two recent books dealing with this general subject,[1] explicitly affirms his purpose to be to establish "the general credibility of the traditional account of the life and work of our Lord." He is well aware of the scientific temper of mind that is coming to prevail more and more in the modern world and the insistence of scholars upon the necessity of thoroughgoing historical research. But the difficulties raised by these disciplines, when brought to bear on the authority of the church's creed and its interpretation of Jesus' significance for modern men, can easily be obviated by a wise and sober investigation of the available historical data. He inculcates the duty of research, but so successfully does he lead his readers past the pitfalls along the way of gospel criticism that in the end they arrive safely before the customary picture of Jesus which ecclesiastical tradition cherishes. He smiles benevolently upon criticism, even the "higher criticism," and then calmly ignores its principal findings.

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[1] Arthur C. Headlam, *The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ* (Oxford, 1923), and *Jesus Christ in History and Faith: Being the William Belden Noble Lectures Delivered in Harvard University, 1924* (Cambridge, Mass., 1925).

This result has been reached in absolutely good faith. No careful reader will for a moment doubt our author's sincerity, but one may with propriety observe that there is here no disposition whatever to distinguish sharply between the values attaching to the historical institution, the church, and those that belong to the historical Jesus, who lived and died in Palestine nineteen hundred years ago. Two sentences give us the key to the interpretation: "The Christian church is built on four great principles—brotherhood, discipleship, ministry, and sacraments. If we take our gospels as we have them, all these principles owe their origin directly to the action of Jesus."[1] Thus it is the Christ of faith and not the Jesus of history whose significance is evaluated in these pages. That these two entities are capable of being distinguished would of course be sharply denied, and thus the problem which confronts many a modern man fails of any clear visualization. The earthly Jesus is a real figure whose life and teachings have exceedingly high value, but when it comes to a question of the currency to be employed in estimating their worth, we are told that the true interpretation of all that Jesus experienced and did, and of the religious experience of mankind since his day, "may be best studied and summed up in the words of the Christian creed."

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[1] *Jesus Christ in History and Faith*, p. 219.

Representing Anglicanism on this side of the Atlantic, Bishop Charles Fiske, with his associate author, Professor Easton, brought out a couple of years ago an account of Jesus which purports to present "the reasonably assured results of historical criticism,"[1] shedding light upon what Jesus actually taught and did, and giving a correct estimate of his personality. Here again the outcome is a full defense of traditional views. As here employed, "historical criticism" gives to the twentieth century a Jesus who was miraculously born of a virgin mother. He worked miracles, though with some restraint, thus exhibiting the same spiritual power that displayed itself in connection with his teaching. He also founded the church, with its divinely authenticated ministry and sacraments. In short, Jesus appears as a historical individual who presented himself in exactly the form in which the later church, through its official creed, conserved his memory. Living with him through the pages of the gospel, "we find that his earthly life was a supernatural, creative element within the old world of sin and death, and therefore a miraculous intervention upon the natural development of history and life." Thus his significance towers far above any modern concern with gospel criticism and evolutionary history.

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[1] Charles Fiske and Burton Scott Easton, *The Real Jesus* (New York, 1929), p. vii.

Other Protestant groups, even when rejecting the soteriological significance of an ecclesiastical ministry and divinely instituted sacraments, are still very generally disposed to employ traditional imagery in their attempts to evaluate the meaning of Jesus for religion today. On the alleged authority of Scripture, without reference to the infallibility of the pope or the validity of the Nicene creed, interpreters seek to maintain that Jesus' worth is not to be found primarily in a critical examination of the gospels, whence one recovers the portrait of the human and earthly personality, but in an affirmation about his deity. The older type of book, dominated by interest in the supernatural, is still very much in evidence. It is constructed on the assumption that biblical materials are alone worthy of consideration as sources of information for evaluating Jesus, and that a document's presence in a canon of Scripture insures the historical accuracy of its content. The Old Testament still serves to furnish prophetic references to Christ, while the New Testament is an inspired record of his work as savior. In reconstructing the story of his career from the four gospels, one seeks to blend all items in the several narratives. Where discrepancies or contradictions might at first sight seem an embarrassment, they are explained away by a suitable method of harmonization. Metaphysical speculations occupy a conspicuous place and doctrinal themes are much in favor. Incarnation, miracles, sinlessness of Jesus, his messiahship, atonement, and similar dogmatic interests are uppermost. And the ultimate aim of gospel study is to reconstruct a convincing presentation of the Christ of faith. As in Catholicism so in Protestantism, even to the present day this is a widely popular form of interpretation.

The type of Protestant theology commonly termed "liberal" was in full swing at the close of the nineteenth century. In Germany, Britain, and America it was exerting a powerful influence over wide areas of Protestant thinking, and in no sphere of speculation was its influence greater than in popular interpretations of the significance of Jesus. It seemed to offer, in the opinion of many persons who still clung fondly and sometimes sentimentally to ancient doctrinal loyalties, the sanest and most satisfactory way of retaining older phrases, while at the same time it enabled one to meet the growing respect for historical research and escape—or seem to escape—the non-scientific world-view that had dominated in earlier times.

It is not always easy to specify the exact boundaries of the "liberal" type of Christology, yet its general characteristics are clear and at present very influential. They appear time and again, though usually unlabeled, in dozens of recent books about Jesus. Sometimes they constitute only one or two threads in the new fabric, while at other times they form the complete warp and woof, even though the author has executed some new designs in the process of weaving his threads together. It may, I think, be said correctly that two outstanding features distinguish this type of interpretation. First, there is an emphasis upon the personal religious experience of the individual Christian, who evaluates Jesus in terms of the emotion which is awakened by contemplation of him on the part of the believer. The second point of stress is the personal religious living of Jesus himself as exhibited in the gospel records. About these two main foci the whole scheme of interpretation revolves. As a matter of course a great deal of elasticity is possible in its application, for the feeling of individuals toward the person of Jesus may vary widely, and there is also much room for variety of opinion regarding the reliable information that can be recovered from the gospels by historical study and criticism.[1] But perhaps the opportunity thus offered for the exercise of individual variations has in itself contributed significantly to the popularity of the method.

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[1] Representative recent statements of this type of opinion, though expressed with numerous minor variations, may be found in Ernest F. Scott, *The Kingdom of God in the New Testament* (New York, 1931),

The ancestry of this procedure is readily recognized. The influence of Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and their successors is clearly in evidence. But the modern restatement of their views has been made with direct reference to current situations and interests. The interpretation proceeds upon the assumption that the historical Jesus embodied and inculcated a higher moral and spiritual ideal than had ever before been discovered—in fact, the highest that can be conceived. Hence in the sphere of religion he is normative and final for all races and generations of mankind. The proof of this appears from the way in which his principles have always appealed and still appeal to every truly and deeply religious man. He cannot be transcended because

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and *The Ethical Teaching of Jesus* (New York, 1924); John Baillie, *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity* (New York, 1929); S. Parkes Cadman, *The Christ of God* (New York, 1929); Sidney Cave, *The Doctrine of the Person of Christ* (New York, 1925); Burnett H. Streeter, "Finality in Religion," *Adventure* (New York, 1928), pp. 131–76, and "The Christ," *Reality* (New York, 1926), pp. 175–215; H. T. Andrews and Others, *The Lord of Life: A Fresh Approach to the Incarnation* (New York, 1929); G. K. A. Bell and Adolf Deissmann (eds.), *Mysterium Christi: Christological Studies by British and German Theologians* (London, 1930); Kirby Page, *Jesus or Christianity* (Garden City, N.Y., 1929); Karl Bornhausen, *Der Erlöser* (Leipzig, 1927).

we are unable to conceive of a higher standard. Those features in gospel tradition that do not thus appeal to us are to be passed over lightly or regarded as later accretions to the originally pure gospel of Jesus. And those members of Christendom today—they are indeed a vast multitude—who do not recognize the validity of this test are lacking in insight or blinded by the glamor of the unessentials that have gathered about Jesus' figure in the course of Christianity's history.

Although Jesus, the historical individual, the man who lived in Palestine centuries ago, is the ultimate source of pure and essential Christianity, it is still thought possible to find in him justification for many if not all items that have emerged in the course of the church's more definitive Christological developments. Most representatives of this school find great satisfaction in thinking of Jesus as uniquely divine, particularly in the realm of spiritual values. As he, during the period of his earthly life and work, revealed his ideals he also revealed God. Now he has the value of God for us, in that he makes possible for the believer the sense of the divine fatherhood and the practice of human brotherhood in the divinely approved manner. In him the love and moral perfection of God became incarnate. And if one so chooses he may evaluate this fact by speaking of the divinity, or indeed the deity, of Christ. Really, he cannot well avoid the use of this language when he seeks a suitable phrasing for the meaning which the historical Jesus has in the experience of his faithful and appreciative disciples even in this twentieth century.

The titles of dignity which Christendom has commonly employed to express its estimate of Jesus are also thought to be still appropriate, when their meaning has been correctly restated. Jesus is not merely one of the sons of God, but he is the unique Son of God. This dignity is evidenced by his sense of a personal relationship to the Father that is ideally close and intimate. It is said that while he urges his companions to realize in their own experience the same type of kinship, he always indicates that the plane on which he stands has not yet been attained by them. And since it is only through their contact with him that they can hope for any measure of success in struggling toward the fulfilment of this ideal, he is both uniquely the Son of God and also the Savior of mankind. Thus he is the Messiah and the inaugurator of the Kingdom of God. But the Kingdom is fundamentally an affair of the spirit, even when Jesus uses the language of contemporary Jewish apocalypticism. The salvation which he has chiefly in mind is eternal and spiritual in its fundamental content, rather than temporal and earthly; and he is Messiah because "through him the great spiritual change" is to be effected. As a consequence of his ministry and the perpetuation of his memory in the world, "the will of God would come at last to its fulfilment in the world and in the hearts of men."[1]

The performance of miracles also has, according to this way of thinking, a fitting place in the life of Jesus. One may not resort to the miraculous for primary evidence of his deity, as was the custom among former theologians. Phenomenal occurrences in connection with his career are believable only as consequences or accompaniments of his spiritual supremacy. It was entirely fitting that one who stood uniquely near to God should display exceptional power in the world of nature. Even his miraculous birth and physical resurrection become tenable conceptions, not because they are needed to attest Jesus' significance, but because it was fitting that one who was spiritually so closely identified with God should enter and depart from this world in some extraordinary manner. Here again proof is to be sought, not by the tedious examination of historical records, but in the quality of the Christian hope "that looks through suffering and

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[1] E. F. Scott, *The Kingdom of God*, p. 127. See also Sidney Cave, *The Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, p. 230: "He called men home to their Father God, and yet spoke as if the Father was only known to him. Entirely dependent upon God, he yet knew himself adequate to all men's needs, and, in his colossal consciousness of Sonship, could bid the weary and the heavy laden come to him to find in him both peace and service. . . . . Only in him do we know what God is, and what man might be."

death to a fuller life beyond." Out of this soil of Christian confidence grows the ineradicable conviction "that such an one as Jesus could not be, as in fact Jesus had not been, holden of death."[1]

Jesus also has unique significance as founder of the church. While one does not assume that he sponsored the papacy, or ordained the principle of apostolic succession for the ministry, or authenticated the sacramental interpretation of baptism and the Eucharist, there is nevertheless a more essential truth in the thought that he is the founder of Christianity as an institution. He is the one who introduced and put power behind the idea that the Kingdom of God is realizable among men. He first revealed the true character of God's love and his will for humanity. By imparting to men the vital energy through which they could attain to the new spiritual life in fellowship with God and with one another, he instituted this soteriological institution which we commonly term the "church." He not only proclaimed the Kingdom but "was himself the Captain of our salvation."[2] Or, as phrased by another recent writer, "the primary significance of Jesus for the Christian world is just that he was the first Christian, the founder and first member of the fellowship of Christian love, the first man to regard his fellows in the true and complete spirit of Christian brotherhood, and to look up to God as Father in quite the Christian way."[1]

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[1] John Baillie, *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*, p. 58.

[2] Scott, *op. cit.*, pp. 128 f.

The death of Christ, about which so much Christological speculation has revolved in past centuries, also finds an appropriate place in this scheme of so-called "liberal" thought. Jesus had faced the prospect of crucifixion with the deliberate purpose of thereby revealing to mankind the fact of God's redeeming love. And if, as one theologian affirms, this revelation stands "at the center of everything in the Christian religion,"[2] the doctrine of the atonement is a most fitting imagery to employ for estimating the significance of Jesus in every age of Christian history. The dogma must not be understood in terms of divine bookkeeping, or as a scheme for tricking Satan out of his legitimate claims to eternal possession of the souls of sinful men. The event took place in accordance with the noble spiritual conception that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," and the death of Christ thus becomes the unique and final revelation of God's love, on which man's hope of redemption rests. Jesus' death was the supreme expression of divine love.

Even the traditional doctrine of the Trinity is not beyond the pale for one who adopts this moralizing and spiritualizing type of interpretation. A valuable imagery for estimating Jesus' worth may still be found in the ancient Christological terminology. Indeed, it is possible to justify this language by reference both to the New Testament and to the experience of the modern believer. If God is known to us in Christ, and Christ by his life and work clearly manifested in himself the moral and spiritual excellence of Deity, what is more fitting than that we should speak of at least two persons in the godhead? But through their fellowship with Christ, Christians today experience the invisible presence of God in their own midst, resident especially in the moral and spiritual center of their being, and to designate this presence what better terminology can be employed than the imagery of the Holy Spirit? Thus God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are, in the experience of the believer, the great and divine three in one. Difficulties may arise when we seek to transform this spiritual experience into the language of liturgy and dogma, but that, we are assured, need not deter a minister in one of the non-liturgical communions from baptizing children "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."[1]

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[1] Baillie, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 181.

The practical convenience attaching to this method of interpreting Jesus' significance for the modern world is self-evident. It serves excellently as a mediator between a long-established and highly revered tradition, on the one hand, and new impulses in thinking that have emerged more and more conspicuously in recent times, on the other. But whether its service is more than a transitory one is open to question. Dissatisfaction with the method seems certain to increase. It is incapable of doing full justice to the historical treatment of the gospel materials in their totality, and it is equally unsatisfactory as an expression of the modern scientific temper of thought when strictly applied to the problem in question. The increasing demand among scholars for a strictly historical i.e. naturalist perspective in one's approach to the Palestinian Jesus makes it even more difficult to harmonize the religious thinking and attitudes of the New Testament people with the deepest religious concerns of twentieth-century men. Yet the method is still widely used.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 190.

When one holds the dogma of normativeness to be essential for religion, and approaches the evaluation of Jesus from this postulate, the mediating interpretation easily seems the safest harbor into which to cast anchor. By paring down the figure of the historical Jesus to the pattern of modern religious interests, and by reducing the ideals of religious people in the twentieth century to the proper set of essential principles, a perfect equation seems to be obtained. Doubtless the notion that for modern men to be truly religious they must pattern their lives and thinking after some standard which has been divinely inserted into the world in the past will long continue to be popular. Thus one acquires a Jesus who may still be worshiped if one feels so inclined, but in any event he can be obeyed and fellowshiped with satisfaction to the emotions.

By accrediting an ideal Jesus to supplant the theological Christ of earlier tradition, the "liberal" school of interpretation has found a way of evaluating Jesus that has been freely appropriated in many different quarters. He can now be made an authority to justify all sorts of favorite ideas and interests. By an analagous process of transformation, one who today attaches religious value to some new social program lays hold on the name of Jesus and makes him the typical exponent of one's special concerns. From time to time we are told that he would have us be pacifists, or that to be his true follower we must practice the Golden Rule in business, or we must espouse the cause of labor against capitalism, or the cause of the capitalist against the unjust machinations of organized labor, or any one of a multitude of causes, according to whatever at the moment happens to be the "hot spot," so to speak, in our religious and social conscience. These special interpretations of Jesus need not be legitimate children of the "liberal" Christology, but the ease with which it molds Jesus into a modern ideal has certainly contributed a great deal toward the possibility of making this strange progeny respectable.

Recently in some quarters a very strong reaction has set in against the attempt to find modern religious significance in the figure of the historical Jesus. Or, perhaps to state the fact more accurately, the futility of endeavoring to transfer instruction and ideals from the pages of the gospels over to human society in the twentieth century by either the orthodox or the "liberal" method has been stoutly denounced. The protest appears in two different forms.

By one group we are told that Jesus is utterly incomprehensible to moderns, that he has no suitable place in the life of our time, and in this very fact lies his supreme religious value. He was God's man, not man's man, and as such he did not aim to bring man and God together, but rather to make men aware of the impossibility of bridging the chasm between deity and humanity. The significance of Jesus can never be properly estimated in terms of historical phenomena; it lies rather in the realm of the superhistorical.[1] This is the underlying postulate determining the type of Christology that is at present taking shape in Germany among the Barthian theologians. Since Jesus, so far as he has significance for faith, stands wholly on the side of God, one might apply to him language similar to that which Barth uses in telling ministers what they ought to preach about God himself: "We ought to speak of God. We are human, however, and so cannot speak of God. We ought therefore to recognize both our obligation and our inability, and by that very recognition give God the glory."[1] Emil Brunner, by whom the Christological views of the school have been most fully expounded, is very insistent that the results of historical inquiry, as represented, for example, in the work of the "liberal" theologians, can never yield an interpretation of Jesus that will have vital significance for the religion of men today. By this means one knows only the human aspects of the Christ, while it is the divine and revelatory side of his work in which a genuine religious meaning is to be discovered. And this aspect of his activity, being on the side of God, may arrest man's attention, or even astound him by revealing the impassable gulf between man and God, but it must remain humanly inexplicable and incomprehensible. The work of the earthly Jesus may help to make us aware of our hopeless condition—of the "crisis" in which we

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[1] See especially Martin Dibelius, *Evangelium und Welt* (Göttingen, 1929); also his article, "Jesus in Contemporary German Theology," *Journal of Religion*, XI (1931), 179–211.

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[1] Karl Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man* (Boston, 1928), p. 186.

X

My approach is – 'from the objective'.

are caught—but it cannot show us the way of escape. Hence historical study and scientific modes of thinking are incapable of supplying a truly religious evaluation of Jesus.[1]

Other moderns who would shed the burden of historical research choose to pursue a very different and more familiar path. They affirm that the chief significance of Jesus for today lies either in the area of the symbolic or in the field of mystical contemplation. According to the former procedure, the most significant Jesus that we know is the ideal figure which the church in the course of its development has set up to represent and personify the noblest elements in its experience and thought throughout the centuries. So moderns ought freely to proceed to ascribe to Jesus meanings which to them seem most valuable in their own situation. Whether these interpretations can be historically justified or not is a matter of relative indifference. The interpreter does not pretend to tell us exactly what Jesus said or did, but professes only to use his name and follow the edifying custom passed down through the ages of ascribing to him all that seemed to believers most valuable in their experience. When this method is adopted the difficulties with historical research are immediately dissolved and no restrictions are laid upon the liberty which may be exercised in producing a portrait of Christianity's hero. All sorts of traditional theological concepts, as well as the total range of modern interests, may be painted into one or another of the portraits, according to the skill and taste of the artist. Many recent books have been constructed along these lines, although very frequently the finished product gives the impression that it represents historical reality, when as a matter of fact it is at best only a historical novel.

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[1] Emil Brunner, *Der Mittler* (Tübingen, 1927), especially chap. vi, "Der Christusglaube und die historische Forschung." For a criticism of the crisis theology as applied to the interpretation of Jesus' teaching see Hans Windisch, *Der Sinn der Bergpredigt* (Leipzig, 1929).

The disposition to seek an understanding of Jesus by means of mystical contemplation has experienced a rather lively revival in recent years. The type of theological thought that has been popularized in modern times by Baron von Hügel and Rudolf Otto has inspired interpreters of Jesus with new courage in the field of mysticism. Often nowadays we are told that the people of India understand Jesus better than do the people of Europe and America. Not that the Hindus are more diligent in their historical research. Their alleged success lies in their aptitude for mystical contemplation.[1] But this procedure never can satisfy the two outstanding twentieth-century demands noted at the beginning of this discussion.

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[1] Note particularly the recent pamphlet by F. Heiler, *Die Mission des Christentums in Indien* (Gotha, 1931).

It cannot solve historical and scientific problems; it can only give us temporary release and relaxation. Those alone can secure permanent peace who are so fortunate as never to be rudely awakened from their mystical reverie. The realistic and local factors in the earthly career of Jesus are facts too stubborn to be thus easily escaped.

But what does [illegible]
this indeed

Who wishes to [illegible]
[illegible] them at once

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

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THE NEW APPRECIATION OF JESUS

Jesus has suffered many things of many interpreters. From time to time they have laid hold on a variety of imagery in an effort to devise suitable forms of thought and language to evaluate his conduct, his teaching, his personality, and his status in the universe. Statements and restatements have followed one another in a continuous succession, as each new generation has striven to adjust its thinking and phraseology to the requirements of changing social, cultural, and religious situations. In general, however, these attempts to reappraise the significance of Jesus for a later age justified themselves by reference to ancient precedents.

The seriousness with which the task was undertaken and pursued gave an atmosphere of finality to each new declaration of opinion. What the devout disciple held as a deep personal conviction, seemed unquestionably to be exactly what Jesus himself had expressed or willed. Consequently interpreters commonly assumed that their opinions represented Jesus' own views about himself and his work. Thus it became a well-nigh universal belief that he had delivered a message and set an example valid for all time. If existing tradition failed to reveal a definite solution to any new issue that might arise, it was the business of the exegete to discover in Jesus an authorized answer to the problem. Hence quite new statements of belief were sometimes formulated, but this evolutionary process of dogma was usually supposed to consist in the mere supplementation of earlier pronouncements. Thus one recovered the correct original; the truth remained a constant quantum. It had existed historically in Jesus' thought, or indeed in the mind of God before the creation of the world, and now found its proper expression in the language of the most recent orthodox theologian. If the new appraisal approved itself to the majority of believers as correct, it was assumed to have been entertained by Jesus; and since he had desired to be thus understood, it followed that the opinion was divinely authenticated.

How to dispose of earlier and now unacceptable views that stood in the line of good orthodox succession, or were to be found in the canonical literature of the church, seems not to have caused any very grave difficulties until within relatively recent times. When the older phrasings became outgrown, as frequently happened, it was comparatively easy to read into tradition the new and desirable meanings, in just the same way that the mind of Jesus himself was revised and brought up to date. If, for example, the first generation of disciples evaluated the master by confidently affirming that he would return in triumph from heaven while some of his earthly companions were still alive, his followers in later ages could repeat the expectation of his coming by projecting its fulfilment into the distant future without feeling that any violence whatever had been done to sacred tradition. Not until very lately, when the sense of historical perspective has become acute and the consciousness of historical development has been stressed, have serious obstacles appeared in the way of this freedom of reinterpretation.

Not until well into the nineteenth century did Christological speculation become acutely aware of the fact that new appraisals of Jesus' significance might be seriously out of harmony with earlier opinions or with views that Jesus himself had entertained. This consciousness imposed upon interpreters a further obligation, which might be discharged in either of two ways. Now that novelties were capable of being perceived, there might arise a conviction that they were to be resisted to the death, even after they had become adopted by a majority. Once upon a time heretical opinion had been simply coterminous with minority opinion, and had been quickly suppressible by ecclesiastical authority. But now it was possible for even the majority to be adjudged heretical, although orthodoxy could do nothing more serious about the matter than simply to issue a vigorous verbal protest. In situations where political and social procedure permitted rival religious bodies to exist, restraining them from violent action against one another, it became actually possible for different forms of belief, each claiming to be correct, to live together in the relation of more or less friendly enemies.

Theologians, however, have never generally relished the appellations "new" and "unorthodox." Almost uniformly they have claimed to reproduce the mind of Jesus, if not the general content of ecclesiastical tradition, more accurately and understandingly than was being done by their rivals. This was only a subtle way of contending that the new views were in reality the true orthodoxy. The representatives of the "liberal" school of Christology, which became conspicuous in the nineteenth century and continues to be very influential to the present day, have always been able to convince themselves that the New Testament writings, or at least their more genuine and earlier portions, when correctly understood, yield one's favorite views as to Jesus' significance, and thus show his thought to have been in conformity with modern opinions. It may be true that on minor and unimportant points his ideas and ours no longer harmonize, but in the area of general principles, particularly in matters moral and spiritual, it is assumed that correct thinking will always reproduce the mind of Jesus.

A different procedure is now demanded by many who seek to estimate the modern significance of Jesus. One feels compelled to distinguish sharply between the "Jesus of history" and the "Christ of faith," and fails to find in the former figure adequate evidence to support the position of either the traditionalists or the "liberals." Some new way of evaluating the meaning of Jesus for religion today is necessary when one cannot discover in history a firm basis for the ideas about Jesus that have been propounded in the creeds or taught by subsequent orthodox theologians, and when at the same time one cannot succeed by a redefinition of terms in satisfying one's self that even the somewhat deflated conception of normativeness advocated by Protestant "liberals" is historically and scientifically justifiable.

Without assuming that traditional Christological dogma represents any reality beyond the sincere efforts of Jesus' ancient admirers to phrase their estimates of him in imagery and categories conformable with their social and cultural interests, without recognizing any obligation to obey his precepts except in so far as they approve themselves today at the imperious tribunal of a modernly enlightened conscience, and with the strictest possible allegiance to discoverable historical facts, one undertakes anew the task of estimating the worth of the Palestinian Jesus for the religion of men in the twentieth century. If this attempt is marked by an earnestness of effort, and a loyalty to the quest for reality similar to that which characterized the work of older interpreters, the results may be quite different from those that have emerged in the past, but the outcome need not be less full of meaning or less vitally important for our religion. Only when the older forms are thought to carry validity in their own right does their rejection necessarily involve a sense of loss of values.

The new method calls for historical inquiry, and a socio-psychological approach to past events and !! persons, in an effort to know Jesus in the particular setting where his lot was cast. Not that any spoken word of his must be automatically authoritative for all subsequent ages, or any act a model to be reproduced by all later generations of disciples. His specific deeds and words may not be as surely determinable as they once were, when gospel canonicity was supposed to guarantee historical accuracy. But if finality is no longer the rule used for measuring the value of Jesus, it is not so all important to know whether he said this or that, or did so and so. His way of life is not necessarily to be our way of life, nor are we to treat the injunctions he delivered to his contemporaries as though they were a legal code regulative for our conduct and belief. The new type of appreciation abandons outright the dogma of normativeness.

How, then, can our acquaintance with the historic Jesus, or with any other person of the past, have meaning for people today? In just the same real and vital manner, though less extensively and immediately, that our contact with contemporaries constitutes a source of help and inspiration for a profitable life. Living with Jesus as intimately as we can, by acquainting ourselves with his earthly career, we learn to know the historical person as he was known by his contemporaries. For the moment, we and he become contemporaries within ancient society. Not that we feel at liberty to make him a twentieth-century individual, or find his attitudes and precepts specifically designed for the needs of our times. We shall not fallaciously assume that he delivered his message with definite reference to the conduct or thinking of a modern captain of industry, an international statesman, a general or a soldier in the army, a factory laborer, or a person of any vocation, profession, or occupation in present-day society. We may readily concede that were he, as we know him in his historical career, living in America today, we should not elect him president of the United States, or deposit our

rejecting

savings in a bank under his management, or employ him as architect for a city skyscraper, or ride in a taxicab with him at the wheel. Perhaps we might even feel hesitation in calling him to the pastorate of our family church, where expert technical knowledge and administrative experience are so necessary to the successful operation of the delicate machinery now in use for the nurture and discovery of spiritual values.

This admission does not mean that we disparage Jesus or condemn modern society. There is much in contemporary life that we are disposed to criticize and deplore, but on grounds that seem quite sufficient without reference to Jesus. Also there are clear evidences in the historical records that he held opinions and entertained attitudes that do not approve themselves to us as suitable for our day. To demand strict uniformity between him and ourselves, without due regard to the geographical, temporal, cultural, and social differentia involved, is to do grave injustice to both parties in the comparison. To say that he was right and we are wrong, or vice versa, is to betray ourselves into the hands of the older dogmatician who set up absolute norms for measuring the spiritual excellence of the life-process. Were this ideal followed as strictly as it is sometimes advocated, worthy living would become simply an imitative, never a creative, task.

Not [illegible]

When we seek from our friends, whether known to us in daily intercourse or in the annals of history, inspiration rather than legislation, the value of the acquaintanceship is not conditioned upon establishing a series of uniformities in practice and belief between us and them. Perhaps sometimes we derive quite as much real help for our distinctive and individual tasks from persons with whom we often disagree in matters of opinion and whose actual conduct we should not wish or be able to copy in detail. This lack of willingness to accept as normative the thinking and behavior of our acquaintances does not necessarily impair the value of our contacts. Indeed, the fact of variation may sometimes heighten the significance of our relationship with others, provided our powers of appreciation have not been dulled by dogmatic assumptions about the necessarily normative quality of our own or their ways of thinking and acting. To deny worth to our contemporaries, or to historical persons, because we cannot regard them as models is only a specious way of asserting that our manner of life and thinking ought to be exemplified by everyone who has lived worthily in the past or who merits our respect and affection in the present.

Creative religious living must strive not to imitate but to transcend all past and present standards, not excepting even the example and precepts of Jesus. Or, more correctly stated, this type of spiritual and practical effort is not concerned with standards at all, but rather with the attainment of experiential values in the life-process as a going concern, values which when later objectivized and formulated readily become the materials out of which standards tend to be constructed. Vital contacts, which stimulate thought, awaken emotion, and contribute motive power to the personality, furnish a richer soil for the cultivation of appreciation than is possible by using the category of finality. The message that comes to us from the canvas of a great artist is not so much the call to reproduce his picture or even the summons to agree with him in his interpretations. Rather, our profitable evaluation is more firmly based upon our ability to perceive the feelings and yearnings of the artist's soul, to relive with him the emotions and aspirations of his spirit. We do not expect to be called upon to paint the same picture, and if we were artistically inclined we should probably feel that our finest appreciation would not be expressed by an effort at literal imitation in either theme or execution. But having attained a sympathetic acquaintance with the artist as he performed his original task, we are better equipped for the specific duty that falls to our hand even though it be only the painting of "potboilers" to decorate the cover of cheap magazines.

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To use another illustration, when we visit a magnificent old cathedral we experience a feeling of enrichment and cherish a genuine appreciation of its creators. But our appraisal of its worth does not involve an acceptance of the structure's normative value as a place in which to assemble for worship in modern times, nor do we concede that it is the ideal type of building to house the activities of an efficient religious organization in the twentieth century. Our contact with this heritage from the past, if properly evaluated, may inspire us with a new vision of the worth of beauty in the service of religion, but when this vision is transformed into reality by us its effectiveness will be conditioned by the vitality of our own creative powers rather than by our loyalty to some ancient model in construction and decoration. Indeed, it is to be feared that much of our modern effort at recovering the ancient values in religious art and architecture has been seriously hampered by too great an allegiance to the ideals of imitation.

This principle of freedom and selective valuation holds true over a wide range of experience. We may sincerely admire a Wagnerian opera, and derive therefrom immense values, even though we are physically wearied by the length of the performance and smile skeptically at the mythological character of its subject matter. Or we may be enthusiastically appreciative of an Alpine sunrise which ineradicably stamps the glory of its beauty upon our memory, although we do not agree that the chilly heights of Rigi are the most desirable habitation for even a July night. The charm of a literary masterpiece, the self-abasement of a medieval saint, the zeal of a great prophetic preacher, the fidelity of one who labors beside us in the commonplace tasks of life, the companionships of home—all these may be highly prized factors in our observation and constitute invaluable help for our own living, quite apart from any normative demands in connection with our efforts at appreciation. When we drag the inspirations received from these sources down to the dead-level equation of an authoritative norm, thereby assuming that the categories of "right" and "wrong" are to shape our judgments at every point where we and others cross paths or tread a common road, how quickly the streams that feed our spiritual life dry up at the fountains! Yet one of the weaknesses of human mentality, especially in the sphere of religion, is its quest for certainty, finality, equilibrium. We want the evolutionary process of experience to stop; we would grasp and imprison the fleeing goals of our vision. Failing to realize that stagnation is incipient death, we strive to live by fixed rules and thus quench the life of the spirit while the body is still in its full vigor.

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But then
find and
truth.

Let us take Jesus for better or for worse, as did his first disciples; only thus can our efforts at appreciation make vital contacts with reality. The

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Jesus whom we know from the pages of history is a living individual who hopes and fears, aspires and strives, experiences elation and disappointments, praises the good and blames the wicked, comforts the afflicted and threatens the proud, succeeds and fails in his designs, grows weary and is refreshed, and pursues an earthly pathway to its fatal end on Calvary. This is the specific person whose significance for our religion today we desire to ascertain; and our method of procedure will be to live with him during the brief course of his activity as intimately as present knowledge will permit. He becomes one of our acquaintances in just the measure that we succeed in making ourselves his contemporaries.

The amount of recoverable information about Jesus is all too meager, yet it is sufficient to give us many a valuable glimpse of the conditions under which he lived and the crucial events in his career during the period of his public work. How and to what extent dependable information can be recovered we have set forth on an earlier occasion.[1] This picturesque individual, as he chose for himself a life-work and pursued his course to its bitter end, exhibits both in his life and in his teaching a type of religion that welled up from the depths of his soul and came to brilliant expression in devout loyalty to the cause he had espoused. Here are substantial materials out of which we may venture to construct an appreciation of him and an estimate of his value for us who cherish his memory and, in a land far removed from that in which he lived and under very different conditions, aspire to make religion a vital force in our own age. How he would have thought and acted in our situation we shall not attempt to predict, but the way in which he proceeded in his distinctive setting is a matter that we have been able measurably to determine, and therefore we may seriously endeavor to take our place by his side and expose ourselves to the impression of his personality and work, even as did his first disciples.

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[1] It is assumed that the reader has an acquaintance with the career of Jesus as reconstructed by the type of historical study represented in S. J. Case, *Jesus: A New Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927). See especially the chapters on "Jesus' Choice of a Task," "Jesus' Pursuit of His Task," "The Religion Jesus Lived," and "The Religion Jesus Taught."

We should like, of course, to become much better acquainted with Jesus than present available information and the remoteness of our contact will permit. Our curiosity, if nothing else, may prompt a desire on our part to visit him as he worked at his trade during young manhood in the little village of Nazareth. But we cannot know how skilfully he wielded hammer or trowel, or how well satisfied we should have been with the product of his labor. Even had we been able to watch him fashion a crooked root into a plow for some local farmer, or build a barn to house the crop, the knowledge thus acquired would not be of any great service to us today. Had we learned to imitate his skill, we should hardly succeed in persuading farmers nowadays to give us employment in making plows and constructing barns after the ancient model. But had we been sensitive to another type of values, we might have admired the diligence and singleness of purpose with which Jesus gave himself to his labors. Or we might have suspected that the young man's heart was not in his work, because he appeared to be dreaming of enterprises yet to be undertaken, and so performed in a very perfunctory manner the task in hand. In either event our acquaintance with him would have had a distinct value for us when we had retraced our steps across the oceans and the ages and had undertaken again to integrate our own living profitably and efficiently within the society of which we are an immediate part.

Acquaintance with Jesus as a prophetic preacher of righteousness rests on a more substantial historical basis. In this area of his activity he can be known and evaluated with greater certainty. Had we accompanied him on the way to the Jordan where John was preaching, we might have acquired a clearer insight into the significance of the spiritual struggle that had been moving within the soul of the youth impelling him to leave home and loved ones to undertake an unaccustomed task in pursuit of a great ideal. We might have thought his action unduly precipitous and unwise. We might have advised the exercise of greater caution and a course of professional preparation that would save him from the extravagances and futilities that seemed to us sure to attend the activities of John the Baptist or any similar enthusiast. But had we been worthy of our new acquaintance we could hardly have failed to appreciate his sincerity and devotion in espousing the ideal that had appealed to him.

No doubt.
Due to this
Jesus could
have been
[illegible]!

The readiness of Jesus to give himself to an enterprise that he believed to be right because in accordance with the will of God must have left upon us an abiding impression, even though we had not shared his convictions and had been unwilling to follow him to the Jordan to become identified with the group of the newly baptized. John was proclaiming the necessity for repentance and consecration to new ideals of righteousness in view of an impending Day of Judgment. We could hardly be expected to divest ourselves so completely of modern ways of thinking that it would have been possible to sympathize heartily with John's point of view. Yet we may readily grant that it was well within the range of possibility for Jesus. The quality of his moral earnestness glows

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with undiminished attractiveness even within a distinctively Palestinian Jewish setting.

We are more impressed than ever with the new rôle of Jesus when a few weeks later we come upon him in the city of Capernaum, or meet him on the highways about the Sea of Galilee, to renew our former acquaintance. We now perceive a new side of his character. His zeal in demanding repentance and reform has not diminished, but it finds expression in ways of conduct and attitudes that may seem to us out of harmony with our former thought of him and his interests. He is not the extreme visionary that we had expected him to become, but is a lay teacher of a religion which intimately relates itself to the feeling and action of ordinary people on the lowly plane of daily activities. The strenuous prophet of impending doom becomes the solicitous seeker of human souls. He frequents the common routes of travel where his helpful quest includes even the outcast and despised social classes. This activity he prefers to a life of seclusion for himself and his companions, who might have constituted themselves into a group of purified spirits safely harbored from temptation in the wilderness while awaiting the advent of God and his Kingdom. We may regret that this new teacher is not more thoroughly skilled in the technique of standard scriptural exegesis, and not more effective in his appeal to the respectably religious people of the urban communities. But we are dull, indeed, if our contact with him does not produce in us a new urge to make religion a primary concern over the total range of life's relations.

The words uttered by Jesus in private conversation or in public address have been sufficiently well recorded to make possible a measure of acquaintance with the more personal and experiential side of his religion. His loyalty toward God and man, the transparent imagery of his parables, the disinterested idealism of his precepts, the trustful simplicity of his prayers, the kindliness of his feeling toward the unfortunate, the joy of his life among birds and flowers, his delicate sense of spiritual values, the flame of his zeal in condemning motives and actions that seemed to him base, his unshakable confidence in the ultimate triumph of right—these are a few of the open windows through which we are permitted a glimpse into the very soul of an attractive and inspiring personality. To fellowship this type of individual, whether in real flesh and blood, or less immediately in the annals of the past, is a high privilege for persons concerned with moral and spiritual issues in any age and under any circumstances.

The personal rather than the professional or institutional aspects of religion seem to have been of primary concern to Jesus. We are wont to applaud the criticism of the scribes and Pharisees reported in the gospels. In much the same temper certain present-day critics of institutional Christianity appeal to Jesus to justify their condemnation of the church, while in the same breath they make Jesus the authoritative advocate of another kind of social organization to supplant synagogue or church. A little reflection ought to reveal the ineptitude of this procedure. It is only when we think in terms of alleged normative standards that we can employ such criteria of evaluation. And it is also very questionable, from the historical point of view, whether Jesus uttered wholesale condemnations of the religious institutions of his time, or contemplated the establishment of a new type of institution such as some modern social theorists would have him sponsor. The attempt to appreciate Jesus in this area of interest is fraught with great difficulties. But no one who entertains smug attitudes or cherishes a fondness for special privileges will ever feel entirely comfortable in the company of any prophetic preacher in Israel, much less in the company of Jesus.

Had we attended Jesus during his public ministry undoubtedly we should have heard him talk much about the Kingdom of God. There would have been no difficulty in perceiving what he meant by this language. The end of the present order of existence was thought to be near at hand. A Day of Judgment was imminent, when God would descend to earth to condemn sinners and reward the righteous. In the meantime Jesus urged people to live in accordance with such ideals of perfection as would prevail in the new community soon to be established by God. Attitudes toward the Deity and toward one's fellows would then be absolutely perfect, and all persons who sincerely desired to be prepared for that impending age would now discipline themselves in qualities of life and attainment suitable to the new status presently to be realized. Undoubtedly it was the vision of this new supernaturally inaugurated society that floated before the eyes of Jesus as he uttered his call to repentance and demanded the kind of life in his followers that would render them perfect as God is perfect.

This Jewish apocalyptic imagery has now lost its significance, and absolute perfection in living does not any longer seem to us practically realizable. This is not because we have become content with a lower ideal but because experience has taught us that a catastrophic end of the world is not at hand and that moral and spiritual ideals when realized always reveal in the distance the possibility of further attainment that had not been and could not be previously perceived. We prize the injunctions of Jesus as stimuli but not as ultimate goals. Yet every responsive spirit will surely appreciate the high value of such stimulation. One may feel no compulsory urge to take literally the command of Jesus to the prosperous and pious young man to sell all wordly possessions and distribute the proceeds to the poor; we do not think the end of the world to be so near that it seems desirable to shed all earthly goods as quickly as possible. Nor may one feel that it is proper to abandon his profession or business, or to forsake an existing though defective religious institution, in order to become a free-lance like Jesus. The problem of adjusting individual conduct to the necessities of social environment in a modern age cannot be solved by imitating an ancient pattern. A different line of action today amply justifies itself in the sincerity and judgment of honest and intelligent people, who may at the same time genuinely admire the sincerity of Jesus and grant the full propriety of his speaking and acting as he did within the particular situation where he lived and in the light of his beliefs about the future.

Jesus has meaning for us, not because he propounded a set of infallibly accurate ideas about the universe and its future, not because he formulated a program of social action to be pursued to the letter by every truly religious man, not because he laid down a set of ethical norms to be followed by all persons who should come after him. The specific Kingdom of God that he visualized did not dawn, and, in our opinion, never will be inaugurated. We find it desirable and necessary to fashion our ideals and conduct in accordance with the needs of an enduring society of the present order. ! Its shortcomings are self-evident, and the obligation to remedy evils is imposed upon us by the facts of immediate experience. Yet in the discharge of our peculiar task Jesus is not without So! significance. The sincerity, the devotion, and the consecrated self-giving of Jesus displayed in his attempt to correct and reform religious living in Palestine centuries ago still appeal to us with inspiration and power even though we are no longer confronted by his particular problems and are unable to entertain ideas that were entirely appropriate to his situation. The very expression "Kingdom of God" may seem to us an antiquated ! imagery perpetuating a pattern of social organization out of accord with our democratic notions, nevertheless the ambition to realize for the humanity of our day a purer and nobler spiritual and material status will certainly suffer no diminution, but will be significantly augmented, by a better Oh ! acquaintance with the interests and ideals of Jesus.

As men of the first century, undoubtedly we should have been alert to hear Jesus say something about himself and his personal significance for the much-desired liberation of the Jewish people from bondage to the power of Rome. Likely enough we should have shared with James and John the aspiration that our picturesque leader would prove to be the long-expected deliverer who suddenly and successfully, through the special favor of God, would drive the haughty foreigner out of the Holy Land and thus not only give us freedom from heathen domination but raise us personally to positions of privilege in the new political régime. We should have sought to estimate Jesus' significance as a savior in terms of our traditional hope that God's Anointed One was about to appear, the Messiah of whom our prophets and teachers in ages gone by had spoken. We could believe that Jesus had unique significance as the person through whom this long deferred expectation was about to find its ultimate realization.

The immediate need of relief from the galling oppression of Rome was so acute that we, like other companions of Jesus, might have felt mystified if not indeed impatient at the hesitation he displayed in asserting his claims. Not content with the benefits he was mediating to us through his teaching and personal companionship, the values of which we had not yet come to appreciate in their fulness, we might have thought to give him greater significance by assigning to him the rôle of messianic liberator. The redemption that God was to effect in the establishment of the Jewish apocalyptic kingdom awaited the descent of an angelic deliverer from heaven; no provision had as yet been made in this type of imagery for the activity of a human leader, a potential revolutionary hero, such as we believed Jesus to be. Thus our zeal would tend to overleap the barriers of futurity that separated us from the coming apocalyptic deliverance, as we visualized Jesus in the image of an earthly prince now in our midst and about to instigate a successful and God-approved uprising against Rome. Thus he would be a true successor of David to restore independence to the Jewish race. Only thus was it possible to attach to Jesus the saving significance that for the moment seemed to be his due.

Has this national messianic evaluation, so natural—indeed, so inevitable—for the contemporaries of Jesus, any significance when we return to our situation in the twentieth-century world? Our political setting may offer its crucial problems, but bondage to a foreign ruler is not one of our perplexities. We are not in need of a savior either to lead a revolution on earth or to inaugurate apocalyptically a kingdom from the clouds. Even had Jesus declared himself to be a prospective Messiah in either the revolutionary or the apocalyptic sense of the term—historically a rather doubtful proposition—this imagery is entirely out of place in our day and age. Not until the original meaning of the language had been completely transformed by subsequent Christian interpretation, a process that began at an early date and continued actively in force for centuries, could this Jewish imagery have any vital import beyond its original Palestinian setting. Only as later gentile Christian theologians redefined the kind of savior needed in their situa- ! tion, and then crowned the Palestinian Jesus with the new definition, could they still call him the Messiah (Christ). Henceforth the title had only symbolic significance, or was employed simply as a proper name.

While it is perfectly apparent that Jesus was not greatly concerned to have his companions appraise him in terms of dignities and titles, it is equally true that when we walk by his side in Palestine we are deeply impressed by the high quality of his character and personality. It is not any formal [illegible] title borne by our companions, but the nobility of [illegible] ! their living, that in reality makes them "saviors" for us in something more than a mere figurative sense. Worthy character, under whatever local or temporal circumstances it may be manifested, breeds a contagion of spiritual health among those who expose themselves to its influence. The passing of time and changing conditions have undermined our confidence in various titles once em- ! ployed to indicate the soteriological significance of Jesus. We now endeavor to penetrate behind these adornments to the influence of the historical person upon our own living as we take a place by his side in the ancient world. In this intimate relationship we readily understand his disciples' desire to find suitable phrases for expressing their appreciation of the help derived from personal contact with Jesus. But their phrases no longer meet our needs.

Sometimes meaning has been attached to special acts of Jesus, like the miracles he is alleged to have performed, or his institution of officials and rites for the church that has grown up around his name. And the final act of his career, his submission to death on the cross, has commonly been evaluated in terms of a formal doctrine of atonement. Once more we would attempt, even in this area of interest, to base evaluation upon the personal religion and character of the Palestinian Jesus. Often we are forced to question whether some of these items as reported in the gospels can be given adequate historical substantiation. But in any event it is the quality of life displayed by Jesus in action that furnishes the basal ground for modern appreciation. We find inspiration, not in claiming power for him or for ourselves to effect the miraculous healing of disease, but in sharing his love for the afflicted. And any physician who serves us in the hour of suffering is welcome only if we are assured that he has received the best training that medical science in the twentieth century can furnish, but he is all the more welcome if at the same time he exemplifies Jesus' type of kindliness and devotion to the needs of his afflicted fellow-men.

What meaning Jesus still has for the institutional side of our modern religious enterprises is a question that representatives of different religious groups will answer in varying ways. It might seem that this area of interest would be one of the least profitable fields to cultivate when seeking to evaluate the worth of Jesus. Religious people of the twentieth century organize themselves into distinctive communities, not because Jesus delivered any command so to do, but rather because of the functional value attending such operations. Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the formal activities of the congregation find their ultimate justification in the service which they render to the spiritual well-being of the membership, both as individuals and as social beings. There are many interests here that would have had no place in the lives of Jesus and his contemporaries in Palestine nineteen hundred years ago. It requires a violent rending of the seamless robe to assume that Jesus had authorized the various practices, dogmas, and rituals that have proved useful at one or another stage in the evolution of Christian institutions. These customs stand justified in their own right rather than by the authority of Jesus.

Yet Jesus is not without significance of another and perhaps more important sort. When we return to the historical situation in which he lived we fail to find that he enacted legislation on matters of ritual, organization, and dogma; but now we can appreciate as never before the strength of his purpose in consecrating himself to his God through an act of baptism received at John's hands. We perceive how constantly Jesus stressed mutual helpfulness within the brotherhood of the disciples, and how strong was the undercurrent of fellowship that pervaded the last gathering in the upper room to partake of a Jewish religious meal. All of this has its value in the life of modern men, even though they participate in a very different type of ceremony and take their place for service in a very differently organized institution.

Keeping company with the Jesus of history, we may have no inclination to seek supreme meaning in the fatal close of his career by appeal to traditional ! ecclesiastical dogmas about atonement. But lacking this instrument of appraisal, we may be all the more impressed by the significance of his tragic death. Let us assume that it has been our privilege to accompany him on his journey to Jerusalem, to watch him during the darkening days of that final week, to sit with him and his close friends in the companionship of their last meal together, to follow him on the way to the garden of Gethsemane, to participate in the agony of that fearful night, to observe the calm assurance with which he faced his accusers, firm in the conviction that he was right. These are precious bits of personal experience that leave an abiding impression rich in meaning for our own religious living in any hour of testing. These memories give to Jesus' great sacrifice far more significance for our spiritual health than can be derived from assent to any formal doctrine of the atonement. The moral and spiritual stamina that inspired him to pursue a way so loyal to his convictions that he was carried on to execution has, we may earnestly hope, not disappeared from the world or ceased to call forth genuine appreciation even within the modernistic atmosphere of our time. We confront no Roman executioner, but today the world still needs as much as ever people stout of conviction and strong in devotion to ideals of human welfare that call for the emulation of Jesus' example, and a vicarious service no less sincere than his, though expressed perhaps in forms that vary widely from those characteristic of antiquity. The sacrifice made by Jesus does not stand isolated in its redemptive meaning, but continues to be efficacious only when repeated by his followers in new forms of religious activity under new conditions in modern life.

The new appreciation of Jesus is concerned with his personal religious living, in so far as that is recoverable from the pages of history. Instead of seeking metaphysical justification for making him the object of our worship, we take our place by his side while he worships—and we never find him worshiping himself. Instead of seeking in him a revelation of eternally valid moral and spiritual norms to be everywhere and always obeyed, we tread with him the pathway of struggle toward the realization of worthy religious attainments in the immediate contacts of life—and we never see him resting on past accomplishments, as though he had already attained to the ultimate goal. We do not ask him to tell us how we ought to worship or what we ought to do; we only ask the privilege of close fellowship with him amid the characteristic scenes of his earthly career.

A rich heritage awaits our quest. We have placed ourselves under the influence of a person whose ideals, efforts, and attainments now become available for us in the constructive religious tasks of the twentieth century. It is very true that vital present-day religion must be of our making, a product of our most sincere efforts in response to the interests and needs of our personal and social experiences. We are not at liberty to substitute the religion that Jesus lived and taught in ancient Palestine for the religion that we must live and teach in our world. But if we have profited as we may from our association with him, the experiences thus acquired cannot fail to increase immensely our equipment for efficient religious activities today. Henceforth we are without excuse if we are lacking in spiritual sensitivity, if we underrate the importance of cherishing noble ideals, if we neglect to revere the sanctity of a pure conscience, if we are half-hearted in our response to the call of duty, if we are narrow in our sympathies and unsocial in our attitudes, if we are tardy or hesitant in our loyalty to the cause of righteousness, or if ever we yield to the seductive impulse to court mediocrity in moral and spiritual affairs. The degree to which we cherish and magnify in real life these elemental virtues is the true measure of our appreciation of Jesus.

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